

**The Author on the Stage:
Fielding's Self-Awareness as Author
and Problems of Authority**

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**I hereby declare that this thesis is entirely my own composition
based on an independent research of my own.**

AUTHOR. A laughing Stock. It means likewise a poor Fellow, and in general an Object of Contempt.

Henry Fielding, 'A Modern Glossary', in *The Covent-Garden Journal*

ABSTRACT

This thesis advances a new perspective on Henry Fielding's self-awareness as author, as it appears in his writings of various genres from *The Author's Farce* to *The Covent-Garden Journal*. The principal argument is that Fielding's problematic self-awareness as author and idea of literary authority evolved through a series of ambivalent relationships with literary and political authorities of his age. At each stage of his career, Fielding found himself in tensioned relations to the Scriblerians, particularly Pope 'the great Poet', Robert Walpole 'the Great Man', and the great or 'High People' at large, including his own patrons. The 'Trade of Authoring' seemed at best a dubious alternative to attain financial (and moral) independence, and Fielding considered himself denied the aesthetic and moral authority to write serious satire by public readership, the new patrons of commercialised letters. Instead of the Fielding we are familiar with, that is, the authoritative Augustan satirist and master of comic fiction, Fielding as appears in the present thesis is essentially 'an author of a farce', by his own self-demeaning denomination, who sees in himself a 'humble servant' to either the great patrons or the paying audience, with only some Drawcansirian mock-authority at best.

Chapter I offers analyses of *The Author's Farce*, a dramatisation of Fielding the novice playwright's ambivalence towards the great in letters and politics, and of his anti-Walpole plays in 1736–37, each in the format of a rehearsal by the 'Author', through whom Fielding converts his self-awareness as author without authority into an opposition formula to veto Walpole's political authority. Chapter II continues to discuss Fielding's peculiar infusion of his authorial concern into the anti-Walpole satire in *The Champion* and *Jonathan Wild*. Chapter III focuses on Fielding's thorough denunciation of 'High People' in *Shamela* and *Joseph Andrews*, in tandem with his resentment at authors' 'Attendance on the Great' and wishful imagining of authorship financially and morally independent of them. Chapter IV examines the way Fielding seeks to disengage his literary identity from his obligations to the

patrons, in his ministerial journals, *The True Patriot* and *The Jacobite's Journal*, and the tensioned drama between Tom the foundling protégé and his patron Allworthy in *Tom Jones*. Finally, Chapter V gives an account of Fielding's despairing view of his want of authority in satirising the moral and cultural degeneracy of his age in *Amelia* and *The Covent-Garden Journal*.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Battestin, <i>Life</i>	Martin C. Battestin, <i>Henry Fielding: A Life</i> (London: Routledge, 1989)
Bell	Ian A. Bell, <i>Henry Fielding: Authorship and Authority</i> (London: Longman, 1994)
<i>BJECS</i>	<i>British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies</i>
Black	Jeremy Black, <i>The English Press in the Eighteenth Century</i> (London: Croom Helm, 1987)
Cleary	Thomas R. Cleary, <i>Henry Fielding: Political Writer</i> (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1984)
Cross	Wilbur L. Cross, <i>The History of Henry Fielding</i> , 3 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1918)
<i>ECS</i>	<i>Eighteenth-Century Studies</i>
<i>ELH</i>	<i>English Literary History</i>
Fielding, <i>Works</i>	<i>The Wesleyan Edition of the Works of Henry Fielding</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967–)
Gay, <i>Works</i>	<i>John Gay: Dramatic Works</i> , ed. by John Fuller, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983)
Goldgar	Bertrand A. Goldgar, <i>Walpole and the Wits: The Relation of Politics to Literature, 1722–1742</i> (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1976)
Hanson	Laurence Hanson, <i>Government and the Press, 1695–1763</i> (London: Oxford University Press, 1936)
Hume	Robert D. Hume, <i>Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728–1737</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988)
Hunter	J. Paul Hunter, <i>Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance</i> (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975)
Johnson, <i>Works</i>	<i>The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson</i> (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1958–)
Kernan	Alvin Kernan, <i>Samuel Johnson and the Impact of Print</i> (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987)
Langford	Paul Langford, <i>Walpole and the Robinocracy, The English Satirical Print 1660–1832 Series</i> (Cambridge: Chadwyck and Healey, 1986)
Lewis	Peter Lewis, <i>Fielding's Burlesque Drama: Its Place in the Tradition</i> (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1987)

- McCrea Brian McCrea, *Henry Fielding and the Politics of Mid-Eighteenth-Century England* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1981)
- Nicholson Colin Nicholson, *Writing and the Rise of Finance: Capital Satires of the Early Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994)
- PMLA *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*
- Pope, *Poems* *The Poems of Alexander Pope*, ed. by John Butt (London: Routledge, 1963)
- PQ *Philological Quarterly*
- Ralph James Ralph, *The Case of Authors by Profession or Trade Stated* (London, 1758)
- Rawson Claude J. Rawson, *Henry Fielding and the Augustan Ideal under Stress* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972)
- Rogers Pat Rogers, *Literature and Popular Culture in Eighteenth Century England* (Sussex: Harvester, 1985)
- SEL *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*
- Swift, *Poems* *Jonathan Swift: The Complete Poems*, ed. by Pat Rogers (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983)

Introduction

In *The Author's Farce* (1730), the *de facto* beginning of his literary career, Henry Fielding has a hack author named 'Blotpage' singing 'An author's a joke | To all manner of folk'.¹ No coincidence that the ironical 'Modern Glossary' in *The Covent-Garden Journal* (1752), the last of his literary undertakings but for the posthumous *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*, has its first entry thus: 'AUTHOR. A laughing Stock. It means likewise a poor Fellow, and in general an Object of Contempt'.² Authorship devoid of authority is a perpetual and most urgent concern in all Fielding's writings, where the word 'author' is seldom, if ever, used without certain irony. His was the 'Age of Authors', as his contemporary Samuel Johnson put it, 'in which men of all degrees of ability, of every kind of education, of every profession and employment, were posting with ardour so general to the press', and the said concern in fact characterised the age, thus Johnson, too, defining an author as 'a kind of general challenger, whom every one has a right to attack'.³ We find the import of Johnson's remark strikingly similar to that of the celebrated opening statement of *Tom Jones*: 'An Author ought to consider himself, [...] as one who keeps a public Ordinary, at which all Persons are welcome for their Money [...] and if every Thing is not agreeable to their Taste, will challenge a Right to censure, to abuse, and to d—n their Dinner without Controul'.⁴

This thesis seeks to provide a hitherto unattempted reading of a wider range of Fielding's works, that is, several of his plays and the four journals as well as the

¹ Henry Fielding, *The Author's Farce*, ed. by Charles B. Woods (London: Edward Arnolds, 1967), II, 3. 31. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

² Henry Fielding, *The Covent-Garden Journal and A Plan of the Universal Register-Office*, ed. by Bertrand A. Goldgar, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 35. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

³ *The Adventurer*, The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1958–), II, ed. by W. J. Bate, John M. Bullitt, and L. F. Powell (1963), 457 (11 December 1753), and *The Rambler*, IV, ed. by W. J. Bate and Albrecht Strauss (1969), 130–34 (5 February 1751).

⁴ *The History of Tom Jones: A Foundling*, The Wesleyan Edition of the Works of Henry Fielding, ed. by Fredson Bowers, with introduction and commentary by Martin C. Battestin, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), I, 1, p. 31. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

novels, in terms of his concerned awareness of the debilitated status of authors, including himself, in the so-called 'Age of Authors'. It is in the principal agenda of the present thesis to revise the still predominant view of Henry Fielding as the authoritative Augustan satirist, the master of English comic fiction, the 'great commentator on life in general',⁵ and so forth. My central argument in the following pages is that, contrary to the conventional view, Fielding's self-awareness as author was seriously problematised by his ambivalent relations to literary and political authorities of his time, which critically affected his imagining of a new kind of literary authority under the changing conditions of authorship in sceptic or even antagonistic terms to those established authorities. As the title of my thesis suggests, much of Fielding's thinking upon the questions of authorship and authority is theatre-oriented, so that I will elucidate my argument on the basis of these three key terms, namely, 'author', 'authority', and 'theatre'.

AUTHOR

'The author is a modern figure', says Roland Barthes in his obituary essay of the very figure, 'a product of our society insofar as [...] it discovered the prestige of the individual, [...] the epitome and culmination of capitalist ideology'.⁶ In a different context, Michel Foucault, too, remarks upon the historicity of the concept of authorship that the 'coming into being of the notion of "author" constitutes the privileged moment of *individualization* in the history of ideas, knowledge, literature, philosophy, and the sciences'.⁷ More specifically, modern authorship emerged in the course of the 'older system of polite or courtly letters—primarily oral, aristocratic, amateur, authoritarian, court-centered—' giving way to 'a new print-based, market-

⁵ Richard W. Bevis, 'Fielding's Normative Authors: *Tom Jones* and the Rehearsal Play', *Philological Quarterly*, 69 (1990), 55–70 (p. 70).

⁶ Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in *Image, Music, Text: Roland Barthes*, ed. and trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), pp. 142–48 (pp. 142–43).

⁷ Michel Foucault, 'What Is an Author?', in *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought*, ed. by Paul Rabinow (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984), pp. 101–20 (p. 101).

centered, democratic literary system' in eighteenth-century Europe.⁸ It was in eighteenth-century England in particular that, as Linda Zionkowski puts it, 'the idea of the author as the origin and proprietor of discourse' was first institutionalised, discourse itself being newly conceptualised as 'a form of property capable of sole possession by the person whose labour creates it'.⁹ At this historical moment, 'the writer of the Renaissance and neoclassical period', who was, in Martha Woodmansee's words, 'a vehicle of preordained truths—truths as ordained by universal human agreement or by some higher agency', becomes an '*author* (Lat. *auctor*, originator, founder, creator), a unique individual uniquely responsible for a unique product'.¹⁰

This 'modern proprietary author' with new rights to claim was long in the making through the eighteenth century,¹¹ while the first upsurge of the new crowd of writers 'who sought to earn their livelihood from the sale of their writings to the new and rapidly expanding reading public' appeared ominous and disruptive of the established system in the republic of letters (Woodmansee, p. 426). If 'hack writing' was not in itself a new phenomenon, 'the intrusion of the concepts of writing for hire, of the author's economic status and also of the parasitic and uncreative quality of literary work into almost every level of literary consciousness' was certainly a momentous development.¹² It appeared to generate an age of hacks, dunces, scribblers, and the

⁸ Alvin Kernan, *Samuel Johnson and the Impact of Print* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 4.

⁹ Linda Zionkowski, 'Aesthetics, Copyright, and "the goods of the mind"', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 15 (1992), 163–74 (p. 163).

¹⁰ Martha Woodmansee, 'The Genius and the Copyright: Economic and Legal Conditions of the Emergence of the "Author"', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 17 (1984), 425–48 (p. 429).

¹¹ It was in the latter half of the century, especially in tandem with the outbreak of legal disputes over authorial copyright, that the concept of 'the modern proprietary author' was fully carved out. In these legal disputes, 'originality' was proposed as the basis of literary property, and in this regard many literary historians refer to Edward Young's *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759) as one of the earliest promulgations of the notion of originality, anticipating the romantic literary theory based on 'such notions as originality, organic form, and the work of art as the expression of the unique personality of the artist'. See Mark Rose, 'The Author as Proprietor: *Donaldson v. Becket* and the Genealogy of Modern Authorship', *Representations*, no. 23 (Summer 1988), 51–85, Woodmansee, pp. 430–31 and 446–48, and Zionkowski, pp. 164–68. David Saunders and Ian Hunter offer to correct these critics and further 'historicise' the genealogy of authorship in 'Lessons from the "Literary": How to Historicise Authorship', *Critical Inquiry*, 17 (1991), 479–509.

¹² Patrick Parrinder, *Authors and Authority: English and American Criticism 1750–1990* (London: Macmillan, 1991), p. 17.

like, especially in the eyes of those who would associate themselves with *belles lettres* and classical learning and think of writing as a gentlemanly pursuit. This was the age that produced *The Dunciad*, the ‘epic of scribblers’ (Parrinder, p.18), and witnessed Grub Street establish its topography to register permanently as the ‘milieu of Dunceness’ in the literary imagination.¹³ Nevertheless, a new course of development was set once and for all in the ‘Commonwealth of Literature’ (*The Covent-Garden Journal*, No. 23), and not a few of those who condemned and derided hack authors were themselves deeply involved in professional writing in one way or another, with a due flurry of self-conscious reactions to the relation between writing and money.

Fielding’s preoccupation with the question of authorship seems to have been a near obsession. His first ever acclaimed performance in the London theatre came under the pregnant title of ‘The Author’s Farce’ in 1730, presenting an author, named ‘Harry Luckless’, in an odd position of at once the hero of the frame play, *The Author’s Farce*, and the author or puppet-master of the inner puppet-show, *The Pleasures of the Town*. Luckless is but the first of Fielding’s ‘Authors’,¹⁴ shortly followed by those Authors in his so-called rehearsal plays, namely Trapwit and Fustian in *Pasquin* (1736), Machine in *Tumble-Down Dick* (1736), Medley in *The Historical Register for the Year 1736* (1737), and Spatter/Pillage in *Eurydice Hiss’d* (1737). Clearly related to these Authors if less central than they are in the plays just mentioned, there are also other authorial or at least quasi-authorial presences, for instance, in the preface and footnotes to *The Tragedy of Tragedies* (1731),¹⁵ the

¹³ Pat Rogers, *Grub Street: Studies in a Subculture* (London: Methuen, 1972), p. 1.

¹⁴ To avoid the controversial term ‘persona’, I shall use this capitalised ‘Author’ to denote each of the fictitious authors in Fielding’s works, considering that the word ‘author’ bears out Fielding’s own usage, and when capitalised, can retain minimum individuality in each fictitious context. For instance, the Author of *Joseph Andrews* means the apparent author of Joseph’s biography according to the fictional fabric Fielding creates in it, not necessarily drawing on the concept of persona or the nice distinction as to whether this Author *is* Fielding or not. A fuller discussion relevant to this issue will follow.

¹⁵ Strictly speaking, ‘H. Scriblerus Secundus’ in the preface and footnotes to *The Tragedy of Tragedies* is not its author but a mock-commentator on its text which he claims ‘was written in the reign of Queen Elizabeth’: *The Tragedy of Tragedies*, in *‘Tom Thumb’ and ‘The Tragedy of Tragedies’*, ed. by James T. Hillhouse (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1918), Preface, p. 81.

prolegomena to *The Covent-Garden Tragedy* (1732), and the introductory scenes to *The Grub-Street Opera* (a revised but unstaged version of *The Welsh Opera* of 1731), *Don Quixote in England* (staged in 1734), and *Eurydice* (1737) respectively. There are also interlude caricatures of contemporary celebrity authors such as Marplay and Sparkish in the original *Author's Farce* (Colley Cibber and Robert Wilkes, two of the then triumvirate at Drury Lane, the latter, due to his death in 1732, replaced by Theophilus Cibber as Marplay Junior in the 1734 version), Pistol in *Tumble-Down Dick* (Theophilus Cibber), Ground-Ivy in *The Historical Register* (Colley Cibber),¹⁶ and Harlequin in *Pasquin* and *Tumble-Down Dick* (John Rich). In addition, those nameless and numberless hacks of the time are incorporated as Scarecrow, Dash, Quibble, and Blotpage, all scribblers to Bookweight the bookseller in *The Author's Farce*.

Fielding's Authors, thus originated in the theatre, transform themselves into the editorial Authors of his four journals, that is, Captain Hercules Vinegar in *The Champion* (15 November 1739–c. June 1741), Mr. Patriot (unnamed) in *The True Patriot* (5 November 1745–17 June 1746), John Trott-Plaid in *The Jacobite's Journal* (5 December 1747–5 November 1748), and Alexander Drawcansir in *The Covent-Garden Journal* (4 January–25 November 1752). As for the prose fictions, *Shamela* has the self-congratulating editor, Conney Keyber, a burlesque author modelled on Colley Cibber of course and on Richardson as well. The narrators of *Jonathan Wild*, *Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones*, and *Amelia*, too, may well be considered, given the internal logic of these works, as apparent Authors of the lives or histories narrated. In addition to these Authors, there appear a legion of authorial figures in a variety of forms and disguises. The curious *Journey from This World to the Next*, for instance, has an author to come across and make public the damaged manuscript of the *Journey* by yet another author left behind in his garret! Some minor characters in the novels are authors or ex-authors by profession, of whom Wilson in *Joseph Andrews* is the

¹⁶ Apollo, god of poetry as well as the sun, and his son Phaeton in *Tumble-Down Dick* also count as burlesque versions of the poet laureate and his son.

most important example. Wilson's is a far more serious sketch than those brief episodes involving petty authors like the 'dull Poet' among the Roasting Squire's cortege in *Joseph Andrews*, the puppet-master encountered by Tom on the road in *Tom Jones*, and the subscription-seeking author, one of Booth's fellow inmates at Bondum the bailiff's house in *Amelia*. Interestingly, Parson Adams, the most famous of all Fielding's characters, is himself an author of sermons on a journey to London for no other purpose than of publishing his sermons, not unlike those provincial aspirants to authorship in eighteenth-century England who flocked to the capital of the eighteenth-century book trade with the same view in mind.¹⁷

Fielding's preoccupation with authorship is representative of the 'Age of Authors', when almost all major literary figures and their outputs, not to mention the dunces themselves, are so seriously and consistently concerned with the phenomena of authorship as I have briefly mentioned above. Therefore it is justifiable and even essential to put all Fielding's Authors and other lesser authorial figures enumerated above, right in this context and try to understand their collective significance as expressing Fielding's concern about being an author in his time, an undertaking which has not yet been attempted by any critic.

Of all Fielding's works, *The Author's Farce* alone has attracted a constant attention in this context; in particular, the four scenes in which Bookweight's hacks enact the hard realities of their existence under the bookseller's exploitation (II. 3–6) have been highlighted as Fielding's dramatised commentary on modern authorship. Ian Donaldson, for example, refers to these scenes as a whole as a 'Dickensian' rendering of contemporary scribblers whom 'Fielding was never really able to regard [...] fiercely as a social menace in the way that Jonson and Pope did'.¹⁸ The same scenes are touched upon by Diana Laurensen as describing the 'depressed situation of the hack writers' under the 'greedy bookseller' like Bookweight who was becoming

¹⁷ See John Feather, 'The Commerce of Letters: The Study of the Eighteenth-Century Book Trade', *ECS*, 17 (1984), 405–24 (p. 421).

¹⁸ Ian Donaldson, *The World Upside-Down: Comedy from Jonson to Fielding* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. 194–95.

the 'new sponsor' to them.¹⁹ Likewise, Pat Rogers finds in *The Author's Farce* 'a wholly successful recreation of the world of the scribbler' (p. 335) from a perspective opposite to that of *The Dunciad*, that is, from within the very world, thus signalling 'the beginnings of a slide from the Duncer as wrongdoer to the hack as victim' (p. 327). Brean S. Hammond, the most recent critic of the play, comments that 'the fundamental issue explored in the play is that of making a living by means of the pen', or in other words, 'the gap between aspiration and actuality experienced by the hungry labourer in the growing literary marketplace'.²⁰

In view of this degree of critical interest in *The Author's Farce* and the Author Luckless alone, it is rather surprising that Fielding's other works have seldom been approached in the same way, as if Fielding had experimented with the issue in *The Author's Farce* only to leave it behind and care no more about it. Indeed, Richard Bevis marks in Luckless the germ of the 'normative Author' in *Tom Jones*, 'that great commentator on life in general, the persona of the Augustan periodical essay, from Addison and Steele to Fielding's own *Champion* (1739–) and beyond' (Bevis, p. 70). Similarly, Simon Varey traces the lineage from the 'commentators in the frame action of a "rehearsal play"' through Captain Hercules Vinegar in *The Champion* to the narrator in *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*.²¹ It is evident, however, that both Bevis and Varey grossly fail to recognise the whole complex of Fielding's concern about modern authorship and his consequent problematic relation to his Authors. To me, the kind of reading these two critics exemplify seems to result from the predisposed hunt for the 'prototype of the narrator' of *Tom Jones* into the earlier works, without questioning the long-accepted view of Fielding as Augustan satirist and the narrator as his surrogate, 'who may instruct us and direct the satire instead of receiving it' (Bevis, p. 58). Such a reading badly needs a corrective, and I think the hint has already been given by the other group of critics cited above. As Donaldson

¹⁹ Diana Laurenson, 'The Writer and Society', in Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature* (London: Paladin, 1972), pp. 91–139 (pp. 114–15).

²⁰ Brean S. Hammond, 'Politics and Cultural Politics: The Case of Henry Fielding', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 16 (1992), 76–93 (p. 83).

²¹ Simon Varey, *Henry Fielding* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 27.

comments, 'Fielding never makes it clear whether Luckless is to be regarded as a Durfey or as a Congreve' (p. 194), or to rephrase it in Bevis's style, whether as a receiver or a director of satire. Luckless is the 'beginning of the Unfortunate Poet' (Rogers, p. 330), and since he is the beginning, the rest of the story is still to be told. To explain the significance and appropriateness of the term 'author' in the present thesis, it will be useful to begin with clearing the way through the pile of terminological confusions and hair-splitting distinctions regarding Fielding's Authors. First of all, because of the formal derivation of Fielding's 'reflexive' plays²² from Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal*, the Authors therein are often described as either reproductions or reversals of Bayes, the foolish, conceited author in *The Rehearsal*, which is exactly the way they are treated in Peter Lewis's *Fielding's Burlesque Drama*. Lewis argues that only Medley in *The Historical Register* is 'not a Bayes-figure, but the antithesis of a Bayes-figure, being Fielding's spokesman and possibly even a self-portrait' (p. 187), and Spatter in *Eurydice Hiss'd* is 'rather like Medley' (p. 194), whereas the others have more of Bayes in them than of Fielding. Of Trapwit and Fustian, though, Albert J. Rivero has a different view, contending for their difference from Bayes.²³ Then the Authors of Fielding's four journals are generally termed as editorial personae within the tradition of eighteenth-century journalism, in which the adoption of editorial 'masks', 'eidolons', or whatever became a given in the wake of Isaac Bickerstaff in *The Tatler* and Mr. Spectator in *The Spectator*. Of them, John Trott-Plaid in *The Jacobite's Journal* is regarded as a pure mask, because of Fielding's known anti-Jacobitism, whereas the others are seen as Fielding's surrogates.

Likewise, discussions of the 'narrators' in Fielding's novels, constituting the greater part of the corpus of Fielding criticism, have been built upon an essentially

²² Since *The Author's Farce* is not exactly a rehearsal play like Fielding's last five plays at the Little Haymarket, I borrow this term, to refer to *The Author's Farce* and the rehearsal plays together, from Peter Lewis, who defines a *reflexive play* as 'a play about a playwright, one of whose dramatic works is incorporated', in his *Fielding's Burlesque Drama: Its Place in the Tradition* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1987), p. 93.

²³ Albert J. Rivero, *The Plays of Henry Fielding: A Critical Study of His Dramatic Career* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989), p. 130.

formalist discourse, the term 'narrator' being in itself of formalist origin, along with its relatives like 'narration', 'narrative', and so on. The Fieldingesque narrator²⁴ is said to be reliable or unreliable, by one critic or another, as the agent of Fielding's 'irony', another recurrent word in Fielding criticism, as his 'mouthpiece', 'surrogate', and the like. Questions begin to come up. Is the so-called inverted narrator of *Jonathan Wild*, for instance, a persona or simply an agent of sustained irony? In other words, is he or is he not a mad author in the manner of Swift's hack in *A Tale of a Tub*? What about the other narrators? Citing Frank Kermode's remark that 'Fielding cannot forbear to draw attention to his cleverness', John Preston argues that 'this can hardly mean that Fielding had the kind of vanity which is the mark of the bad author' (p. 100). Preston also says that 'Fielding clearly wants to discredit the narrator' (p. 100) with the same trait as Trapwit in *Pasquin*, 'the vain author of an incoherent and unfunny comedy' (p. 96). Does Preston mean by this that Fielding's narrator is another Trapwit who cannot be Fielding's mouthpiece? Arthur Sherbo says that 'the "narrator" never is the author as man' but equivocates about the difference or distance between Fielding and his narrator by concluding, after enumerating allusions to the narrator's characteristic qualities down to physical peculiarities, that the narrator (*not* narrators) is 'essentially the same man in all four of the novels' who after all resembles Fielding too much.²⁵ Is there any critically meaningful difference between this quibbling conclusion after such an arithmetic feat²⁶ and the straightforward observation by Henry Knight Miller that 'Henry Fielding presented himself as the

²⁴ Since Wayne C. Booth's influential *Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991), terms like the 'dramatized' or 'implied author', the 'created self', and many others have been widely used by various critics to describe the Fieldingesque narrator. See, for instance, John Preston, *The Created Self* (London: Heinemann, 1970), and Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974). For a useful survey and discussion of these critics and others, see Ian A. Bell, *Henry Fielding: Authorship and Authority* (London: Longman, 1994), pp. 18–35.

²⁵ Arthur Sherbo, *Studies in the Eighteenth Century English Novel* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1969), pp. 4n10, 8.

²⁶ For example, Sherbo counts how many times the 'I will not determine' kind of sentences are used in *Tom Jones* (35 times) and *Amelia* (7 times) respectively and claims on that ground that the narrator of *Amelia* shows more competent knowledge of the world (p. 8).

historical personage Henry Fielding, in narrating *Tom Jones*, with such reference as that to the little parlour in which he was writing his romance (XIII. 1)?²⁷

In fact, a similar controversy has been persistent among critics of eighteenth-century satirists. For a typical example, there are, as Marcus Walsh sums up, largely two groups of readings in the case of Swift's *Tale of a Tub*: 'Readings of the *Tale* which explain that Swift uses the persona of a mad modern writer to exemplify and satirize scholastic and modern incoherence in learning and belief, and readings of the *Tale* (notably Ehrenpreis's) which deny the use of a persona and invite us to seek "the direct sense implied by the irony"'.²⁸ However, 'all this pother about persona, voices, and the rest' between 'persona critics' and 'anti-persona critics', as Robert C. Elliott terms them,²⁹ hardly seems resolvable. Besides, both concepts of persona and irony, essentially of formalist origin and subject to individual interpretation, are unsuited to explain the phenomenon that eighteenth-century writers were particularly and collectively conscious and elusive in their use of authorial media.³⁰ I shall purposely leave them out of account throughout my thesis.

The said controversy provoked by Ehrenpreis in the 1960s centred on Pope's *Epistle to Arbuthnot*, in which Maynard Mack had distinguished three voices or personae, namely 'the Stoic *vir bonus*', 'the naïf', and 'the public defender'.³¹ Persona or no, Pope is highly conscious of his image in this poem, and for that matter, we now meet with quite different explanations. To more critics than one, Pope is 'the first businessman among English poets', 'the first English writer other than the

²⁷ Henry Knight Miller, 'The Voices of Henry Fielding: Styles in *Tom Jones*', in *The Augustan Milieu: Essays Presented to Louis A. Landa*, ed. by Henry Knight Miller, Eric Rothstein, and G. S. Rousseau (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. 262–88 (p. 264).

²⁸ Marcus Walsh, 'Text, "Text", and Swift's *A Tale of a Tub*', *Modern Language Review*, 85 (1990), 290–303 (p. 290).

²⁹ See Robert C. Elliott, 'Swift's "I"', *The Yale Review*, n.s. 62 (1973), 372–91.

³⁰ Ian Watt has suggested the historical dimension of the 'virtual omnipresence of irony' in eighteenth-century writers, saying 'in no other period does irony loom so large upon the literary scene', in 'The Ironic Tradition in Augustan Prose from Swift to Johnson', in *The Character of Swift's Satire: A Revised Focus*, ed. by Claude Rawson (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1983), pp. 305–26 (p. 305).

³¹ See Irvin Ehrenpreis, 'Personae', in *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature: Essays in Honour of Alan Dugald McKillop* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), pp. 25–37, and Maynard Mack, 'The Muses of Satire', *The Yale Review*, 41 (1951), 80–92.

Renaissance playwrights “who by careful management of his literary productions was able to earn a good deal of money from them” (Kernan, p. 10), ‘the first major English poet to achieve wealth and status without the aid of patronage but entirely from the sale of his writings’ (Woodmansee, p. 428), or even ‘the archetypal bourgeois poet, obsessed by money and property and the attentions of the great’ (Parrinder, p. 27). Maynard Mack wonders at Pope’s ‘aristocratic attitudes toward the writer’s profession’ and ‘claim to lofty self-sufficiency’, which look ‘laughable coming from one of the most painstaking of craftsmen, one who was also a canny publisher as well as a shrewd judge of timing and public taste’.³² ‘We should remember’, says Ian A. Bell, ‘when reading Pope’s self-descriptions that they are very deliberate constructions.’

Pope was always very conscious of what we might now call marketing an image of himself. In terms of portraiture, the case is clear. We are familiar with the whole range of anti-Pope iconography, in which he is pictured as an ape, a spider, or as hideously deformed. In contrast to these, there are a vast number of authorised portraits in which Pope always appears alone (so that his diminutive stature is less obvious), aloof, and crowned with the garlands of poetic fame. [...] they collaborate with the enterprise of the poems in creating a sanitised and heroic version of the author, seen as high-minded and independent.³³

Not only ‘politically marginalised [...] also circumscribed financially’ for his Roman Catholicism, Pope had to be and was ‘more active in his pursuit of money’ than he could and did admit to the public. Hence the stage-managing or ‘laundering’ of his image in *To Arbuthnot* and other poems as well (p. 62).

Ironically, Pope’s aesthetic embarrassment might have been saved if he had not been so exceptionally successful in the newly emerging literary market. ‘Pope is the

³² Maynard Mack, *Alexander Pope: A Life* (New Haven and New York, Yale University Press, 1986), p. 110.

³³ Ian A. Bell, “‘Not Lucre’s Madman’: Pope, Money, and Independence”, in *Alexander Pope: Essays for the Tercentenary*, ed. by Colin Nicholson (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), pp. 53–67 (p. 61).

exception', says Terry Belanger, for 'most writers in the first half of the eighteenth century could not earn their living from *belles lettres*'.³⁴

If to write for money is to be a hack, it is interesting to consider who *did* write for a living in Restoration and eighteenth-century England, and what their contemporary reputations were as a result. It is likely, for example, that almost the only persons earning their living by their pens in seventeenth-century England were playwrights, whose income derived not only from publication but also, and more particularly, from playhouse receipts. This is not to say there were no best-selling works except plays—but the likelihood is that writers of those religious and historical works which sold widely during the seventeenth century received lump-sum payments (if they received payment at all), and that they did not share in the profits caused by their popularity.

The watershed figure is Alexander Pope, who by careful management of his literary productions was able to earn a good deal of money from them. A substantial part of his success came from his translations of Homer and their careful sale by subscription to a carefully assembled circle of patrons, friends, and admirers. (p. 21)

According to W. A. Speck, the publication of the *Iliad* by subscription in 1715 was 'so profitable to the poet that it prompted him to bring out the *Odyssey* ten years later' and the two ventures earned Pope the sum of £9,000.³⁵ In his later translation of the *Odyssey*, though, Pope kept it from the public that he collaborated with his two friends Elijah Fenton and William Broome, 'hoping to encourage subscribers by his own eminence alone', which was 'a shabby business all round [...] a dishonest cover-up for the sake of gain' (Bell, "Not Lucre's Madman", p. 63). When this came out, Pope's enemies and Grub Street writers, 'motivated perhaps by envy as much as by outrage, constantly castigated Pope for his financial acumen and apparent avarice' and charged that 'Pope had become a rich man at the expense of others, and that he had contempt for anyone now poorer than himself' (p. 63).

The 'shabby business' notwithstanding, Pope later puts his collaboration with Broome in the following context:

³⁴ Terry Belanger, 'Publishers and Writers in Eighteenth-Century England', in *Books and Their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. by Isabel Rivers (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), pp. 5–25 (pp. 21–22).

³⁵ W. A. Speck, 'Politicians, Peers, and Publication by Subscription 1700–1750', in *Books and Their Readers*, pp. 47–68 (p. 48).

Gay dies un-pension'd with a hundred Friends,
 Hibernian Politicks, O Swift, thy doom,
 And Pope's, translating three whole years with Broome.³⁶

With no 'sarcasm' on Broome, Pope annotates, the 'author only seems to lament, that he was employ'd in Translation at all',³⁷ thus couching what appeared a questionable financial conduct to others in a lamentation over the common 'doom' of poets in a degenerate age. It is particularly interesting to note how he amplifies his own hackish affliction by revising the third line in *The Dunciad* of 1743, while retaining the other two virtually untouched.

Gay dies un-pension'd with a hundred friends,
 Hibernian Politics, O Swift! thy fate;
 And Pope's, ten years to comment and translate.
 (III. 330)

Pope creates and indeed lives out the myth of independent retirement earned through hard work, even if a poet's hard work means 'scribbling' as he implies in these lines:

But (thanks to *Homer*) since I live and thrive,
 Indebted to no Prince or Peer alive,
 Sure I should want the Care of ten *Monroes*,
 If I would scribble, rather than repose.
 ('The Second Epistle of the Second Book
 of Horace Imitated by Mr. Pope', 68)

Swift's 'doom' as Pope put it, was perhaps a far worse one than Pope's. Swift refused to take money for his service to Harley with *The Examiner*, but in expectation

³⁶ *The Dunciad Variorum*, in *The Poems of Alexander Pope*, ed. by John Butt (London: Routledge, 1963), III. 326. Further references to Pope's poems, given after quotations in the text, are to this edition and by lines.

³⁷ In the same note, Pope takes care to record his fair, even generous treatment of Broome in such detail that it reveals his consciousness of the attack on his hypocrisy: 'The opinion our author had of him [Broome] was sufficiently shown, by his joining him in the undertaking of the *Odyssey*: in which Mr. *Broome* having engaged without any previous agreement, discharged his part so much to Mr. *Pope*'s satisfaction, that he gratified him with the full sum of *Five hundred pounds*, and a present of all those books for which his own interest could procure him Subscribers, to the value of *One hundred more*.'

of 'some suitable position in the church [of England] as a reward',³⁸ which, being a more traditional and therefore less embarrassing form of patronage, would have suited him much better than cash payment, if realised at all. In the end, this expectation fails him, and for Ireland 'Poor Swift departs, and, what is worse, | With borrowed money in his purse'.³⁹ This disappointment embitters his poetry at this juncture, but Swift holds his head aloft for having supported 'the public interest' without reward ('The Author upon Himself', 27). He is seen to seek his noble but not remunerative solace that he 'was at the tables of the great. | Frequented lords; saw those that saw the Queen' and

[...] Harley, not ashamed his choice to own,
Takes him to Windsor in his coach, alone.
At Windsor Swift no sooner can appear,
But, St. John comes and whispers in his ear;
The waiters stand in ranks; the yeoman cry,
'Make room', as if a duke were passing by. (31)

After all, the Swift who is disinterested, proudly unpaid, and at the same time, not immune to chagrined feelings towards 'the great', is one of the perennial subjects of Swift's poetry.

Less proud may seem Gay's on-stage authors: the 'Steward' in *The What D'Ye Call It* (1715), the 'Beggar' in *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), the 'Poet', 'an arrant courtier or an arrant beggar' in its suppressed sequel *Polly* (published in 1729),⁴⁰ and 'Master Peter' the harassed puppet-master in *The Rehearsal at Goatham* (posthumously staged in 1754). What underlies all these authors in common is Gay's

³⁸ F. P. Lock, 'Swift and English Politics, 1701–14', in *The Character of Swift's Satire*, pp. 127–50 (p. 133). See also J. A. Downie, *Robert Harley and the Press: Propaganda and Public Opinion in the age of Swift and Defoe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 12, and Frank H. Ellis, Introduction, in *Swift vs. Mainwaring: The Examiner and The Medley*, ed. by Frank H. Ellis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), p. xxv.

³⁹ 'Horace, Epistle VII, Book I: Imitated and Addressed to the Earl of Oxford', 93, in *Jonathan Swift: The Complete Poems*, ed. by Pat Rogers (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983). Further references to Swift's poems are to this edition and by lines.

⁴⁰ See *Polly*, Introduction, 24, in *John Gay: Dramatic Works*, ed. by John Fuller, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), II. Further references to Gay's plays are to the act, scene, and line numbers in this edition and given after quotations in the text.

exasperation with the great who not only disregard but uncomprehendingly plague and suppress talented authors (like Gay) instead of encouraging them. Thus Master Peter deplores that 'they have the power, and we must submit' (*The Rehearsal at Goatham*, Scene the Last. 254). Gay's authors are beggars in double sense: they are obliged to 'beg' favour of the great only to be denied and humiliated, and in consequence left in 'Poverty' that is the 'Title to Poetry' (*The Beggar's Opera*, Introduction). 'Gay's pursuit of patronage', says Downie, 'was more open' than Pope's or Swift's.⁴¹ When it finally ended in his appointment in late 1727 as Gentleman Usher to Princess Louisa, which Gay took as 'a calculated insult on Walpole's part' and Swift called 'one of the cruellest actions I ever knew, even in a minister of state', the London audience had only to wait three months till he opened fire with *The Beggar's Opera* (Downie, p. 181). The legend that *The Beggar's Opera* made 'Gay rich, and Rich gay' aside,⁴² Gay's notion of authorship as beggary instilled into his mind by his humiliating experiences with the great could hardly be a welcome one. Ironically enough, Pope is said to have congratulated Gay on being "a freeman" without obligations to the court' (Downie, p. 181), in the same manner as the line about his own indebtedness to 'no Prince or Peer alive'. In this sense, Gay's beggar-author embodies at once his chagrin at authors' dependence on the unrewarding great and his fantasy upon the ironic freedom and independence of a beggar, similar to Swift's on those of a poor Irish parson who 'went where he pleased, said what he thought; | Not rich, but owed no man a groat' ('Horace, Epistle VII, Book I', 33).

While the Scriblerians took their seats of independence at Twickenham, at St. Patrick's, and at St. Giles's respectively,⁴³ thus distancing themselves from the 'inexorable bathos of authorship itself' (Parrinder, p. 18), and there formed their

⁴¹ J. A. Downie, 'Walpole, "the Poet's Foe"', in *Britain in the Age of Walpole*, ed. by Jeremy Black (London: Macmillan, 1984), pp. 171–88 (p. 181).

⁴² Samuel Johnson, 'Gay', in *Lives of the English Poets*, ed. by George Birkbeck Hill, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), II, 275.

⁴³ 'I own myself of the Company of Beggars', says Gay's Beggar, 'and I make one at their Weekly Festivals at St. Giles's' (*The Beggar's Opera*, Introduction, 3).

moral perspectives from which to criticise the age, the real scribblers stuck to another myth for an escape from the realities of Grubbean authorship. A contemporary of Pope, Richard Savage (1697–1743), ‘daringly created and lived out the role of the writer in an earlier age, that of the aristocratic rake and gentleman of fashion, the man of honour, the town wit, a Rochester or Wycherley writing for his own amusement’ (Kernan, p. 79), against his ‘characteristic Grub Street background’ and dreary realities there as recounted in Johnson’s *Life of Savage* (p. 78).⁴⁴ His pathetic flamboyance notwithstanding, Savage lived and died ‘a social outcast’ (Kernan, p. 28), and in Savage Parrinder finds the archetypal ‘anti-bourgeois’ poet in direct contrast to Pope (p. 27) and Kernan glimpses Johnson’s ‘alter ego’ (p. 138).

‘The old image of the gentleman-poet died hard’, as Kernan puts it. About one generation later than Savage, to a poet like Thomas Gray (1716–71), obviously not of ‘the Grub Street race’ (*The Dunciad*, I. 44), the idea of taking money for poetry was still far below consideration. Thomas Gray’s letter to Horace Walpole, cited by Kernan (pp. 64–65), still reveals his reluctant concession to publishing his *Elegy*, in preference for ‘the courtly tradition of anonymity and [...] manuscript circulation’ (p. 64). Gray insisted on an anonymous publication and disdained to take money from the bookseller either for the *Elegy* or for other poems, which altogether earned the bookseller over £1,000 (p. 65). Authors of less aristocratic tastes and in less comfortable circumstances than Gray’s stuck to the same gentleman-writer image, when they could not afford the gentlemanly disdain of money. Oliver Goldsmith (1730–1774), for example, lived on the verge of Grub Street but strove to live out this gentleman-writer image. Though Goldsmith clearly understood, unlike Savage, that “‘a fatal revolution” had taken place “whereby writing is converted to a mechanic trade””, it did not quench ‘his desire to be something more than a poor, awkward hack’ (Kernan, pp. 77, 82).⁴⁵

⁴⁴ For discussions of Johnson’s *Life of Savage* right in this context, see Kernan, pp. 78–81, and Parrinder, pp. 26–29.

⁴⁵ Laurensen touches upon the survival of the image of the gentleman-writer through the eighteenth century into the next: ‘writers as late as Byron and Scott insisted on considering themselves as

On the other hand, authors of less fortune than Pope's and less courage than Savage's seem to have somehow attempted to undermine and demystify the image of the gentleman-writer disdainful of professional or hack writing. As I have mentioned earlier, Pope's enemies in Grub Street tried to vilify him by underlining his dubious business dealings and accusing him of hypocrisy as well as avarice. James Ralph, 'an archetypal "dunce"'⁴⁶ and Fielding's partner in the days of the Haymarket theatre and *The Champion*, is a particularly important figure in the demystification of the literary profession. In his *Case of Authors by Profession or Trade Stated* (1758), Ralph shatters all illusions surrounding the life of writing by declaring that 'there is no Difference between the Writer in his Garret, and the Slave in the Mines'.⁴⁷ He warns that writers are the 'Dupes of [their] own delusions' of superiority over other mechanical labourers (p. 72), thus 'refusing to recognise the exchange value of their work' and 'exploited by booksellers' in a downright commercial society.⁴⁸

It took a writer like Samuel Johnson to create a new dignified role for the modern author. First of all, Johnson's outlook on the deluge of 'Authors' is more admittingly analytic than disparaging or despairing.

The present age, if we consider chiefly the state of our own country, may be stiled with great propriety The Age of Authors, for perhaps, there never was a time, in which men of all degrees of ability, of every kind of education, of every profession and employment, were posting with ardour so general to the press. (*The Adventurer*, 11 December 1753)

As exemplified by his famous affirmation, in his typical no-nonsense style, that 'no man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money',⁴⁹ Johnson 'accepted openly,

gentlemen rather than authors, although it was the success of the latter which did much to re-establish the literary image' (p. 115).

⁴⁶ Michael Harris, 'Journalism as a Profession or Trade in the Eighteenth Century', in *Author/Publisher Relations during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, ed. by Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Oxford: Oxford Polytechnic Press, 1983), pp. 37–62 (p. 37).

⁴⁷ James Ralph, *The Case of Authors by Profession or Trade Stated* (London, 1758), p. 22.

⁴⁸ Linda Zionkowski, 'Territorial Disputes in the Republic of Letters: Canon Formation and the Literary Profession', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 31 (1990), 3–22 (p. 15).

⁴⁹ James Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ed. by R. W. Chapman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 731 (5 April 1776).

rather than trying to conceal, the conditions of writing in print circumstances', especially his 'status as a paid professional writer' and ensuing needs 'to write swiftly and effectively on any topic under deadline pressures' and to please 'those whom he was the first to call "common readers"' (Kernan, p. 17). In accordance with these new conditions and needs, not against them, Johnson created 'a new role for himself as the writer who can earn his living by writing for the marketplace and still assert his authorial dignity and social importance', when the 'courtly connection' no longer seemed to confer authority on patronised writers (p. 20).

Before Johnson, however, and even after him, the two conflicting needs, one to hold on to the old myth of *belles lettres* and the gentleman-writer, and the other to confront the demystifying reality of the 'Writer in his Garret', often coexisted in one author or another, as we have seen in Goldsmith's case. In this regard, Fielding was another in whose life as author the two needs were intertwined with each other in a most problematic way. 'Despite his genteel background', says Cleary, 'Fielding was a professional. He was dependent upon the profits from his writing for a living'.⁵⁰ In the aristocratic eyes of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Fielding 'was to be pity'd at his first entrance into the World, having no choice (as he said himself) but to be a Hackney Writer or a Hackney Coachman'.⁵¹ He began his career in the theatre, because it was the likeliest choice for a novice 'Hackney Writer'.

Poetry did not pay (unless one were an Alexander Pope); the novel as we conceive it was practically undreamt of; journalism and hack writing were barely past their infancy, and decidedly ill-paid. The young writer's best hope had traditionally been the theatre.⁵²

James Ralph attests in *The Case of Authors*: 'The Writers have three Provinces. To write for Booksellers. To write for the Stage. To write for a Faction in the Name of

⁵⁰ Thomas Cleary, *Henry Fielding: Political Writer* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1984), p. 16.

⁵¹ Letter to Lady Bute (23 July 1754), in *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, ed. by Robert Halsband, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966–67), III (1967), 65–69 (p. 66).

⁵² Robert D. Hume, *Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728–1737* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988) p. 1.

the Community' (p. 19). The simple truth about Fielding's career is that he tried all these methods of writing for money as necessities dictated and opportunities arose. He started in the theatre for the reason I have just explained. When the theatre closed for him in 1737, Fielding took up partisan journalism seriously, thus 'turning hackney author now in earnest',⁵³ and would involve himself with four journalistic enterprises in his life. As for 'writing for the booksellers', perhaps the truest form of hack writing, as depicted in *The Author's Farce* (III. 3–6), Fielding was not completely above it, either. While working on the launching of *The Champion* in 1739, he was compelled by his desperate straits for money 'to accept an overture from his bookseller John Nourse to translate Gustave Alderfeld's voluminous *Histoire militaire de Charles XII, Roi de Suede*' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 266). I agree with Battestin that this experience was dramatised into Wilson's story in *Joseph Andrews* as follows:

A Man in my Circumstances, as he [Wilson's bookseller] very well knew, had no Choice. I accordingly accepted his Proposal with his Conditions, which were none of the most favourable, and fell to translating with all my Might. I had no longer reason to lament the want of Business; for he furnished me with so much, that in half a Year I almost writ myself blind.⁵⁴

The more we learn of the dreary details of Fielding's life as author, truly worth a story no happier than Wilson's, the more incongruous we find the picture he gives of authors by analogy with premier figures in various orders:

Indeed there are no Characters which are so seldom seen in their Perfection, as a great Poet, Lawgiver, and Statesman; as correcting the Morals, reforming the Laws, or regulating the Government of a Nation, are Works which as they demand the highest Talents, require but very few Persons.

In reality, what the Ministry are to the State, the Bishops to the Church, the Chancellor and Judges to the Law, the Generals to the Army, and the

⁵³ Martin C. Battestin, *Henry Fielding: A Life* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 235.

⁵⁴ *Joseph Andrews*, ed. by Martin C. Battestin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), III. 3. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

Admirals to the Fleet; that is a great and good Writer over the Morals of his Countrymen.⁵⁵

Obviously these are wildly wishful analogies, inconsistent with the realities of Fielding's life as author or his more realistic self-awareness as author. It is in tandem with these fantasising analogies that, for example, Hercules Vinegar, John Trottlaid, and Alexander Drawcansir appoint themselves as judges of their own censorial courts in the respective journals, and the Author of *Tom Jones* enthrones himself as the law-giving 'Founder of a new Province of Writing' (II. 1). No wonder, Luckless becomes king of Bantam! All such claims or indeed fantasies can be understood as Fielding's measures of screening himself from the sordid realities of market-directed authorship in a similar context to those myth-making processes we have remarked in other authors. What is unique about Fielding is that he himself seems to deride the fiction he makes for himself as author, which in effect does a similar job, in a different style, to Ralph's downright demystification of authorship. His definition of *author* as 'a laughing Stock' succinctly reveals this critical ambivalence in him, which makes the most crucial aspect in his characterisation of the Authors, none of whom are stable enough to be categorised in 'either/or' terms, such as surrogates or personae, reliable or unreliable, self-portraits or not, normative or not, and so on. They are as a whole the outcome of Fielding's uncertainty and anxiety about his own identity as an author in the course of the commercial revolution in the 'Commonwealth of Literature'.

AUTHORITY

The anxiety virtually every eighteenth-century author felt about the professionalisation of authorship was to a great extent due to the threat of its

⁵⁵ *The True Patriot*, No. 8 (24 December 1745), in *The True Patriot and Related Writings*, ed. by W. B. Coley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 159, and Letter XL, in Sarah Fielding, *Familiar Letters between the Principal Characters in 'David Simple'*, 2 vols (London, 1747), II, 298. Fielding contributed Letters XL–XLIV to his sister's *Familiar Letters*.

effacement of cultural authority from the life of writing. In an earlier or more cohesive society, where a writer was conceived as 'a vehicle of preordained truths' (Woodmansee, p. 429) or a 'reproducer of traditional truths' (Rose, p. 56) and these truths were believed to be incorporated in the established order and the values of rulers, each writer derived his or her cultural authority from the recognition of these repositories of values and truths. However, as the authority of these values and their repositories began to be questioned, the old kind of 'close identification of the writer with his patron' (Laurenson, p. 107) became less and less workable as a pledge of prestige and authority for the patronised writer. In this context, it is no coincidence that contemporary discourses on political authority had capital bearings on those on literary authority in various ways.

On the other hand, as authorship became increasingly market-centred, authors anxiously realised that their status was levelled down to that of 'a paid worker' or a mechanical labourer (Kernan, p. 6), which seemed to make authority out of the question. Even if professional writing, it is claimed, freed 'the writer from the need for patronage and the consequent subservience to wealth' (Kernan, p. 5), it entailed another kind of 'subservience', for 'just as the drama's patrons are the theatre-going public, so an author's patrons are the people who subscribe to or purchase his books' in the literary market.⁵⁶ Given that most authors condemned this new readership as vulgar and tasteless, the new subservience to them felt, if anything, more unpleasant than the old to the great and wealthy. When authors were not ready to accept their new relationship with the latter-day patrons, they would wear the traditional yoke much more easily than the new one or even idealise the one in contrast to the other. In reaction to this new subservience to the public and also in view of the necessity of distinguishing or rather advertising themselves in the overcrowded market, many authors strove hard to associate themselves with the peerage and beyond, whose striking predominance in contemporary subscription lists and dedications indicates that authors still sought 'the chance to bask in reflected cultural glory' through the

⁵⁶ Paul J. Korshin, 'Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage', *ECS*, 7 (1974), 453–73 (p. 454).

great.⁵⁷ The struggle of authors for a new kind of authority was anything but easy, because of their double attitude towards the great.

The relation of authors to authorities, especially to their patrons, was never a simple one even before the introduction and expansion of commercialised authorship, in so far as patronage was by nature ‘an exchange relationship between a pair of persons of unequal status’ (Laurenson, p. 97). ‘From early on’, says Laurenson, ‘the political value—and dangers—of authors were obvious’ to rulers (p. 101), so that they cultivated the former and suppressed the latter through the machineries of patronage and censorship. For example, Laurenson argues that though Queen Elizabeth did encourage the theatre, ‘there was not complete freedom of expression’ in the theatre, nor for Shakespeare himself, whose ‘art’ was not seldom ‘made tongue-tied by authority’ (pp. 109–10).

In a similar context, Laurenson reorients the parallel myth of the golden age of literary patronage in Augustan Rome and early eighteenth-century England.

In Rome, [...] the severe factional conflict which culminated in the murder of Caesar was followed by the reign of Augustus, who was anxious to reconcile the factions and to promote peace and consolidation at home and in the Empire. With the aid of Maecenas he deliberately cultivated and used writers such as Virgil, Horace, and Livy to present a favourable image of his person and to promote a return to the harmony of the old Republic. Naturally he feared the fate of his predecessors; a general policy of encouragement of the arts was accompanied by patronage of specific writers to promote his goals and safeguard his person. Maecenas became an archetypal and legendary figure; his name was a synonym for the literary patron. A similar deliberate cultivation of writers by patrons for their own ends occurred during the eighteenth century in England, in a different sociological setting. (p. 101)

What is implied here is that in either society this allegedly golden age was preceded by a series of civil wars and factional feuds and an ideological settlement was yet to be made after the political one. In this kind of historical moment, ‘the writer might be dangerous and censorship was necessary’ (p. 98) or patronage was advisable because the writer could be useful as well as dangerous. Direct, institutionalised censorship

⁵⁷ Pat Rogers, ‘Book Dedications in Britain 1700–1799: A Preliminary Survey’, *BJECS*, 16 (1993), 213–33 (p. 229). See also Speck, pp. 65–66.

aside, patronage was ‘always extremely selective’, as Paul J. Korshin puts it, and this could be a form of indirect censorship in itself. Then the implicit ‘financial tyranny’ would bring in ‘a timorous self-censorship’ on the part of the protégé (p. 454). By the complex nature of patronage and censorship, writers were in most cases on unequal terms with authorities.

It makes a significant difference between Augustan Rome and Augustan England that under the ‘peculiar type of patronage’ (Laurenson, p. 111) that both Laurenson and Arnold Hauser date to have flourished between 1688 and 1721, that is, between the Revolution Settlement and Walpole’s ascendancy,⁵⁸ ministers and party politicians replaced the crown and the aristocracy as patrons of writers. With two parties disputing upon ideological questions and contending for power, the importance of party propaganda became obvious to ministers like Harley, ‘one of the first politicians to realize how vital was a good press to the prestige of government’⁵⁹ and to employ Defoe and Swift among others as operators of his ‘propaganda machine’. Under such circumstances, Laurenson claims, ‘writers were given a new role and could command a price’ and ministers employed and rewarded writers ‘with regular salaries and pensions, lucrative posts, and protection’ (p. 112). Hauser even says that ‘the price they pay is higher and the honours they award to their authors greater than the rewards formerly bestowed on a writer. [...] At no other time and in no other country have writers been honoured with so many high offices and dignities as in England at the beginning of the eighteenth century’ (p. 545). With the rise of salary, it is said, the writer’s ‘moral value also rises in the estimation of the public’ (p. 545) and his social position, ‘it was alleged, had returned to that prevalent in Augustan Rome; he was seen as “one who keeps even the ship of state”, rather than trimming between opposing parties according to his own interests’ (Laurenson, p.

⁵⁸ See Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, trans. in collaboration with the author by S. Godman, 2 vols (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951), II, 543–46.

⁵⁹ Laurence Hanson, *Government and the Press, 1695–1763* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 88. For Harley’s conduct of public propaganda, see Downie, *Harley*.

112). It is specifically this Roman association that Fielding had in his mind in his analogy of 'a great and good Writer' to a 'Lawgiver' and such like.

In reality, the view shared by Laurensen and Hauser is based on the impression fostered by contemporary writers for polemic necessities. In ministers' pay, writers were inclined or obliged to eulogise their paymasters, especially their alleged encouragement of letters and learning, to legitimate their being in power. It is more than probable that much of the Augustan myth was created in this process and handed down to later ages. In contrast to the myth, 'poor Swift' returned to Ireland bitterly disillusioned about courts and ministers, as we have seen. Daniel Defoe 'was often in debt' and barely above 'dire straits' even with his quarterly £100, which he received from 1707–1714 in return for his service to Harley with the *Review* (Downie, *Harley*, p. 13). Contrary to what Hauser says of the exalted estimation of authors under ministerial patronage, the truth is that partisan writing 'still had a reputation as a vehicle for "hacks", writers who, like the hackney coaches from which the name derives, were available for hire',⁶⁰ and this explains why authors like Defoe felt obliged to deny the fact that they were paid by ministers. Even after his 'close connection' with Harley became an open secret', Defoe 'consistently denied that he was the paid henchman of Harley' (Hanson, p. 95).

In my view, what really makes such patronage system 'peculiar' is the fact that as it replaced the older Renaissance style munificence, patronage itself imbibed the rationale of blatant commercialism and a new payer-payee relationship superseded the older patron-client relationship. Cash-nexus and direct exchange value were growing more and more discernible, as Defoe's case testifies: his quarterly £100 came to a period exactly with his editorship of the *Review*. Swift was not 'simply a hired writer' like Defoe and attending the Saturday Club, but the invitation to the 'tables of the great' came only 'ten days after Harley had made the generous mistake of offering to pay him'. 'Generous' or no, Swift refused the offer of cash (Ellis, pp. xxviii–xxix). It

⁶⁰ Kathy JoAnne Ivey, 'My Persona, My Self: The Political Periodical Personae of Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, Jonathan Swift, and Daniel Defoe' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Rochester, 1991), p. 21.

is more likely that the payer-payee relationship, more explicitly unequal than the patron-client relationship, inclined to degrade, instead of exalting, the status of authors.

‘This exceptionally favourable situation for authors’, Hauser goes on, ‘comes to an end completely when Walpole enters office in 1721’, because

the power of government party seems so consolidated that it is able to forego all propaganda; the influence of the Tories, on the other hand, is so small that they are not in a position to pay authors for their services. Walpole, who has no personal relation to literature, also does not find any surplus money and vacant offices for authors. (p. 546)

This is simply untrue. On the contrary, ‘Walpole’s closeness to the world of authorship and propaganda’ was rather exceptional (Rogers, ‘Book Dedications’, p. 230), and he was more actively interested and engaged in running his propaganda machines than any other minister.

One of the first things Walpole did on assuming the premiership was to gain control ‘of all but a few of the valuable mediums of publicity’, either through ‘purchase or subsidy’. (Downie, ‘Walpole’, p. 173)

Ever keen to impose censorship on public media, Walpole even succeeded in obtaining control over the theatre by getting the Licensing Act passed in 1737, which put an end to Fielding’s career as playwright. Walpole was also a master-player of the ‘patronage game’ (Cleary, p. 99), and his game was played strictly on the rationales of commercialism: ‘Walpole [...] paid only for services rendered or anticipated, and was quick to cut back if and when the opportunity arose’ (Downie, ‘Walpole’, p. 187).

In response to clamours against his preference for inferior and therefore cheaper authors, commonplaces in the opposition propaganda, Walpole and his henchmen chose to be quite free in admitting their mercenariness and to defile the opposition

press by stressing the no less 'mercenary nature of opposition writing'.⁶¹ The disclosure of the extent of his subsidies by the Parliamentary Committee of Secrecy after his fall confirmed the 'fact' of what the opposition press had constantly accused him of doing, which is significant not because Walpole and his writers would hide the fact but because it became an established fact, not merely a commonplace in the opposition propaganda. Walpole completed the commercialisation of patronage, which was already discernible before his ascendancy, and played no minor role in the fundamental demystification of the literary profession.

No other minister featured so outstandingly in the literature of the period as Walpole did throughout his regime. He was 'constantly being accused of presiding over a decline in English letters' by the majority of writers in the 'literary opposition' (Downie, 'Walpole', pp. 171-2), who were 'moved to do so perhaps by principle, but certainly by their resentment at the preferment of the unworthy and the neglect of artistic merit on the part of the ministry, the very institution which they had formerly regarded as the source of patronage and guardian of excellence'.⁶² Probably not all of these writers were so unduly neglected as they believed, but as Goldgar says, 'by and large, writers who sought patronage for purely literary efforts were less successful than those who could contribute to Walpole's political success by their writing' (p. 10). In the prime of *The Craftsman*, chief opposition paper in the 1730s, even Lord Hervey admitted that 'all the best writers against the Court were concerned in the Craftsman, which made it a much better written paper than any of that sort that were published on the side of the Court' (Hanson, p. 117). As we have remarked earlier about the Scriblerians' attitude to ministerial patronage, it was now on the lack of such patronage that they congratulated themselves and based their literary merit and moral integrity. The poet's 'triumphal comfort', Swift writes to Gay, lies in 'never having received a penny from a tasteless ungrateful court, from which you deserved so much, and which deserves no better Genius's than those by whom it is

⁶¹ Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), p. 124.

⁶² Bertrand A. Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits: The Relation of Politics to Literature, 1722-1742* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1976), pp. 9-10.

celebrated'.⁶³ By choosing his writers by cheap political usefulness, not by literary merit, Walpole contributed critically to the divorce of literary from civil authority.

Fielding joined the list of anti-Walpole writers and indeed became one of the most vigorous accusers through Walpole's regime, with his satirical plays, especially in the last two seasons at the Little Haymarket, the *Champion* essays, and *Jonathan Wild*. It all happened, though, after his initial bids in the first couple of years of the 1730s failed to earn him the patronage of the Prime Minister.⁶⁴ Downie argues that Fielding's attitude towards Walpole oscillated between extreme antagonism and 'intermittent courtship' over his whole career (p. 182). The term 'courtship' can be misleading, though, for after the early 1730s, no active 'courtship' on Fielding's part was known, although he was probably not above taking Walpole's money for holding back *Jonathan Wild* from publication, because of his financial hardships (Battestin, *Life*, p. 285).

Fielding's veering round to anti-Walpole satires after the failure of his initial attempts to ingratiate himself with the Prime Minister is anything but an exceptional case in the contemporary literary scene. Edward Young, Richard Savage, and 'dozens of hopeful poets lavished praise upon him [Walpole] in their verses and dedications', although Walpole was 'generally indifferent to their pleas' (Goldgar, p. 10). James Thomson, who would later become *the* Broad Bottom poet, was in 1727 bidding for Walpole's patronage by dedicating his poem to him (p. 46). In the same year, Gay was 'hoping still for preferment at court' (p. 41), and while working on the translation of the *Odyssey*, 'Pope's effort [...] to gain patronage from the ministry was both more successful and more quiet [than Gay's effort]—so quiet, that it has received less attention than it deserves' (p. 34). Despite his professed 'Honour' of being 'the only Scribler' of his time with no obligation to the ministry, 'it is clear', Goldgar argues, 'that Pope, like other scribblers of his time, did receive a present from a ministry' (p.

⁶³ *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, ed. by Harold Williams, 5 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963–65), II, 436.

⁶⁴ See Battestin, *Life*, pp. 78–80, Goldgar, p. 100, and Cleary, p. 25.

35).⁶⁵ The truth was that 'poets, whether Thomson, Pope, or Gay, considered patronage by the government their just reward' (p. 47). 'Most of the opposition writers had, at some time or other, courted government patronage' (Downie, 'Walpole', p. 173), and Fielding was just one of them.

In the years between his enlistment in the Broad Bottom opposition in 1735 and the fall of Walpole in 1742, Fielding's energies were applied solely to making the Prime Minister a common 'Object of Contempt'. It is of special moment in the present thesis that in doing so, Fielding persistently equated the Prime Minister with a variety of authorial or pseudo-authorial figures. In his anti-Walpole satire, Fielding certainly drew on the commonplaces in opposition propaganda, which 'repeatedly characterised [Walpole] as Punch, or as a farceur, or as a fiddler, or as a gang-boss, or a master of ceremonies', in sum, 'the great showman of state',⁶⁶ but to be fair, most of them were in fact Fielding's own creations. Fielding uses these authorial figures with distinct theatrical associations, to underline, most of all, how void of authority the Prime Minister is. Pillage in *Eurydice Hissed* is the single most important case in this regard, and Captain Vinegar and Jonathan Wild, too, are characters created on the same principle as Pillage, as I shall demonstrate in appropriate chapters. In *Eurydice Hissed*, 'the most thoroughly political, most steadily anti-Walpole of Fielding's five plays of 1736-37' (Cleary, p. 103), Fielding delineates the Prime Minister as the 'author of a mighty farce at the very top and pinnacle of poetical or rather farcical greatness'.⁶⁷ Walpole is, like Pillage, author of a 'damned farce', and by no coincidence, Pillage is a wry self-portrait on Fielding's part drawn from the recent damnation of his *Eurydice* by the audience at Drury Lane. Most surprisingly, with all his intense antagonism to Walpole's regime, Fielding becomes one with the Prime Minister through Pillage, the author of a damned farce.

⁶⁵ For the details of these and other writers' relationship with Walpole, see also Downie, 'Walpole'.

⁶⁶ Pat Rogers, *Literature and Popular Culture in Eighteenth Century England* (Sussex: Harvester, 1985), p. 29.

⁶⁷ *Eurydice Hissed*, in 'The Historical Register for the Year 1736' and 'Eurydice Hissed', ed. by William W. Appleton (London: Edward Arnolds, 1968), 26. There being no act or scene division in *Eurydice Hissed*, further references to the play are to the line numbers in this edition.

To his contemporaries, Walpole's regime represented the hatching of a new 'reign of credit', a qualitatively 'different kind of power in society'.⁶⁸ Pope denounced the lack of moral authority in Walpole's government, in whose fiscal policies he recognised 'the chaotic introduction of a new system of revenue'. He brands Walpole's as a 'power devoid of authority' and takes upon himself the moral authority lacking in the Prime Minister, through a 'schematic polarisation' of what Walpole represents and what he himself embodies (Bell, "Not Lucre's Madman", pp. 53–54). On the contrary, Fielding sees a Walpole in himself or vice versa, an author without authority, an author on the stage, like Pillage, to be hissed and damned by the audience, or in other words, a 'master of a public house', whether it is a playhouse or the House of Commons. He converts his anxious self-awareness as a modern, unclassical author (of a farce) without authority into an anti-authoritarian formula to burlesque Walpole's illegitimate power, 'devoid of authority'.

Fielding's already problematic relationship with authorities and no less problematic view of both political and literary authority go through a significant complication in the midst of his career. During Walpole's regime, he could at least bathe in the aura of glorious opposition to a corrupt government. The entrance of his Broad Bottom patrons into the Pelham ministry in 1744 put an end to his opposition career and required of him a contrary task to champion the ministry against opposition assaults. It was now his turn to be attacked and ridiculed as the 'known pension'd Scribler for the M—try'.⁶⁹ Once in the establishment, Fielding finds himself in the awkward position of having to defend the authority of the ministry and denounce the abuse of liberty by opposition writers, which is exactly the reverse of what he used to do as opposition writer under Walpole's regime. In addition to the awkwardness of the task, Fielding confronts debilitating inheritances from the

⁶⁸ Colin Nicholson, 'Figuring Out Credit in *The Dunciad*', in *Alexander Pope: Essays for the Tercentenary*, pp. 68–82 (pp. 70, 76), republished with substantial changes as Ch. 6 of *Writing and the Rise of Finance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁶⁹ Fielding quotes *London Evening Post* (12–15 March 1748) in his *Jacobite's Journal*, No. 16 (19 March 1748): *The Jacobite's Journal and Related Writings*, ed. by W. B. Coley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), p. 210. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

preceding age. The previous opposition's vigorous campaign against the authority of the Walpole ministry, in which Fielding had enlisted himself, would inevitably injure that of every succeeding ministry. The stigma of mercenariness and servility left on ministerial writing, as a combined result of constant accusations by the opposition press and brazen admissions from Walpole's camp, would also continue to be there, thus the more disabling Fielding from defending his own authority as ministerial writer, not to mention that of the ministry. Against these circumstances, Fielding champions what he calls the 'best of Governments' (*The Jacobite's Journal*, 26 March 1748, p. 215) and deplores its undue subjection to the malicious opposition and public opinion. Here again, Fielding turns to the image of an author on the stage or master of a public house as mirroring a minister of state, but now it is not so much to ridicule the authorial figure as to rebuke the malicious audience, the unruly public. Squire Allworthy in *Tom Jones* is depicted as this kind of authority, subject to every kind of criticism, whether he is right or wrong. The Paradise Hall becomes yet another public house, where Allworthy the master of the house holds his jurisdiction as Justice of the Peace, but to be constantly censured by his audience, that is, his slanderous parishioners.

Fielding's attitude to his patrons, though, is no less ambivalent than to Walpole or the great at large. At its most fundamental, Fielding's self-awareness as author is derived from his resentment against the subservient relation of authors to the great that entails the one's ideological as well as financial attendance on the other. Thus Fielding, throughout his career, harbours ambivalence or even antagonism towards the great, which he discloses in more or less surreptitious manner as his circumstances vary in different relationships with different great men. In the years around the composition and publication of *Joseph Andrews*, Fielding becomes most caustic in decrying the failure of authorities who he sees as having completely departed from their traditional virtues and duties, of which not the least is to discern and encourage talented men of letters. Accordingly, Fielding's self-awareness as author is given its sincerest expression in *Joseph Andrews*, in tandem with his

thorough repulsion for 'Attendance on the Great', which is particularly germane to the story of Wilson the retired author (III. 3). On his turning an apologist for his patrons in the ministry, the new task cannot but controvert Fielding's innermost repugnance against 'Attendance on the Great'. To some extent, Fielding reveals his willingness to convert his 'great' connections into a badge of distinction from mere scribblers, which attests that he partakes of the tendency among his contemporaries to regard aristocratic patronage still as a pledge of cultural authority. More importantly, though, Fielding seeks to disengage his literary identity from material obligations and political loyalty to his patrons, thus envisioning ultimate literary authority in terms of moral independence. Literary authority, in Fielding's ideal at least, is not to be granted or taken away by any patron or any external authority, political or literary.

THEATRE

The importance of the theatre for Fielding goes much further than the simple fact that he started his career as playwright or the possibility that the theatre 'gave him stock characters and situations'⁷⁰ or that 'Fielding's training in [...] the theatre' was responsible for his delight in 'symbolic incident, elegant set-piece confrontations and peripeteia, and an intricately "well-made" plot in which all loose ends are miraculously tied together in the final chapters' of the novels.⁷¹ Fielding's main legacy from the theatre is not dramaturgy itself but its overall influence on his more personal than conventional outlook on 'human Life as a great Drama' (*Tom Jones*, VII. 1). In the particular context of the present thesis, too, it is of great moment that Fielding spent his crucial formative decade as author in the theatre from 1728 to 1737, that is, from the year of *The Beggar's Opera* to that of the Licensing Act. As

⁷⁰ Sheridan Baker, 'Fielding: The Comic Reality of Fiction', *Tennessee Studies in Literature*, 29 (1985), 109–42 (p. 110). Claude Rawson also points to 'carefully patterned scenes with a certain quality of self-containment, the gallery of strongly sketched comic characters', with regard to 'Fielding's debt to his playwriting experience': *Order from Confusion Sprung: Studies in Eighteenth-Century Literature from Swift to Cowper* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1985), p. 261.

⁷¹ Neil Compton, Introduction, in *Henry Fielding Tom Jones: A Casebook*, ed. by Neil Compton (London: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 17–18.

Terry Belanger says, 'almost the only persons earning their living by their pens in seventeenth-century England were playwrights' (p. 21), and in truth, the theatre was as always the most commercial and public venue for writers in Fielding's time, too. Even so, the ever commercial nature of the theatre became even more conspicuous as a result of the 'commercialization of leisure', which J. H. Plumb notes as 'one of the incontestable signs of growing affluence in eighteenth-century British society'.⁷² In another but closely related context, Johnson's famous line, the 'drama's laws the drama's patrons give',⁷³ sums up the uniqueness of the theatre, in which 'all persons, who pay for their places, whether noble, gentle, or simple'⁷⁴ buy their law-giving power into the bargain. The eighteenth-century audience, Leo Hughes argues, became even 'more conscious of the problems of the self-government' (p. 3), in tandem with the age's marked preoccupation with such issues as monarchical authority, the relation of ruled to ruler, and so forth.⁷⁵ The theatre therefore easily became an arena where the paying public fought the establishment over the dominance in theatrical affairs. Furthermore, the audience's 'obsession with government brought in all possible parallels with state affairs' that would 'permit close examination of the various claims of *rights, powers, privileges, and authority*' (Hughes, p. 9). Fielding's experiences in this commercial London theatre in problematic relationships with the authority of the government and that of the paying public gave shape to his thoughts upon the economic realities of authorship and their complex relation to both civil and aesthetic authority.

⁷² J. H. Plumb, 'The Commercialization of Leisure in Eighteenth-Century England', in Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Europa Publications, 1982), pp. 265–85 (p. 265).

⁷³ Samuel Johnson, 'Prologue Spoken at the Opening of the Theatre in Drury-Lane, 1747' (53), in *Poems, Works*, VI, ed. by E. L. McAdam, Jr., with George Milne (1964), 87–90.

⁷⁴ Theophilus Cibber, 'An Epistle from Theophilus Cibber to David Garrick Esq.', p. 2, quoted in Leo Hughes, *The Drama's Patrons: A Study of the Eighteenth-Century London Audience* (Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1971), p. 7.

⁷⁵ Important discussions of contemporary political ideology focusing on the issue of authority include H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), and J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1688–1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice during the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

J. H. Plumb points to 'the entrepreneurial ingenuity' as a 'hallmark of eighteenth-century commerce' (p. 271), and Pat Rogers, too, remarks that the rise of 'a new class of person [...], the purveyor or entrepreneur of entertainment' in the eighteenth century was one of the major impetuses to the commercialisation of 'pleasure' (Rogers, *Literature and Popular Culture*, p. 3), particularly of the 'sights and sounds of city life' (p. 1).

Its effect on the performing arts was not confined to the popular end of the market, that is the shows catering for a largely uneducated audience. There were important developments running parallel in the more rarefied setting of Drury Lane and the Haymarket. Theatrical managers, for instance, were less commonly working actors; when they were, they owed their prominence as much to their skill as an impresario as to any skill as an executant. The royal patentee at the playhouse would no longer be some distant and amateurish aristocrat, but so to speak a working director. In an age of commercial consolidation, even the haunts of pleasure were put into the hands of a professional. (p. 3)

As Rogers rightly points out, while the Restoration theatre was led by two courtier-managers, William Davenant and Thomas Killigrew, their successors in the early eighteenth-century theatre were the Cibbers and the Riches, those shrewd, entrepreneurial actor-managers. Throughout the period in question their unashamedly mercenary management policies and practices were held responsible for the wholesale degeneration of the contemporary theatre by many critics and authors, among whom Fielding was one. Still, these entrepreneurial managers did lead the London theatrical world, purveying for 'all persons, who pay for their places'.

The overall situation between the dissolution of the United Company in 1695 and the beginning of the theatre 'boom' encouraged by the success of *The Beggar's Opera* in 1728 (Hume, p. viii) was a patent monopoly by the proprietors of the two patent theatres at Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields.⁷⁶ With the profitable monopoly in their hand, the patentees could rely on steady revenue without adventuring themselves on new authors and plays or making any serious capital

⁷⁶ For a brief history of the patent monopoly, see Hume pp. 2–14.

investment in the physical conditions of their theatres to attract the theatre-goers. The phenomenal success of *The Beggar's Opera* changed the picture, though. The 'lucrative possibilities of satire on the model of Gay's *Beggar's Opera* were obvious' (Cleary, p. 16), so that 'for the first time since 1642', says Hume, 'London had a third company of import' (p. 38) at the Little Haymarket, where the first pirate production of *The Beggar's Opera* in June 1728, among other ballad opera imitations, revealed the 'first sign that someone was prepared to capitalize aggressively on the situation created by the triumph of *The Beggar's Opera*' (p. 37). It was followed by the opening of yet another non-patent theatre in Goodman's Fields in October 1729 (p. 39). Then John Rich of Lincoln's Inn Fields, the archetypal theatrical impresario, opened a new playhouse at Covent Garden in 1732, probably to 'operate companies in both, or rent the old one out to another entrepreneur without damaging the receipts of his own company', and did rent it to various companies (p. 145). Compared with the monopolistic stability before 1728, the theatre 'boom' through the 1730s, when at least five theatres were running simultaneously in unprecedented 'full-fledged competition' (Hume, p. 38), attests that the theatre was 'becoming an industry' (Plumb, p. 265), with an increasing number of people aware of and actively investing in the 'lucrative possibilities' of this new industry. The new competition made the proprietors of the patent theatres even more blatantly commercial and somehow more adventurous than before, so that 'a ruthless pragmatist' like Colley Cibber, for example, would accept Fielding's plays in the season of 1731–32, 'past piques notwithstanding', if only they 'could put money in management's pocket' (Hume, p. 112), which also meant that he was ever ready to cut them back the first moment they failed to sell tickets. It was the Licensing Act of 1737 that would retrieve a virtual monopoly for the patentees. Fielding's theatrical career coincided precisely with this period of extreme competition and even accelerated commercialism in the London theatrical world. He himself turned entrepreneurial manager, self-titled 'the Great Mogul', of his own company at the Little Haymarket in 1736. There Fielding produced his most aggressive anti-Walpole pieces, also the most successful in box-

office terms, not only because of his new-found allegiance to the Broad Bottom faction, which Cleary argues formed itself in the latter half of 1735 (p. 1), but also because 'opposition propaganda was selling tickets at every theatre' (Hume, p. 239).

What was the audience like in Fielding's time? To go back first to the turn-of-the-century audience, the allegedly new arrival of the lower-middle classes in the theatre was commonly vilified as responsible for the degeneration of theatrical taste by critics like John Dennis, who deplored that 'the English were never sunk so miserably low in their taste, as they are at present'.⁷⁷ Compared with the Restoration audience, which was, it is believed, homogeneous and court-centred, audience from the end of the seventeenth century and onwards appeared heterogeneous in origin and taste and sometimes even riotous, 'hissing' and 'damning' plays and their authors, offering violence to actors and actresses, and so on.⁷⁸ It is open to doubt, though, whether the miscellaneous composition of the audience was in itself the real cause behind the degeneration of taste and eruption of disorders in the eighteenth-century theatre. As for the Restoration audience, we can say that it was not so court-centred or homogeneous as it is reputed, on the significant evidence of Samuel Pepys' complaint, as early as in 1662, about 'the company at the house [i.e. playhouse] today which was full of citizens, [...] jostled and crowded by prentices' (Thomas, p. 176). Allowing for a little exaggeration and even *hauteur* in his annoyed tone, Pepys' theatre may not have been so 'full of citizens' or 'crowded by prentices' as it appeared to him. Still it is reasonable to infer from his observation that the Restoration theatre was frequented by quite a large number of those uncourtly spectators as well as by courtiers and ladies. On the other hand, many critics, turning mostly to the audience's heterogeneity for the explanation as to the early eighteenth century theatrical features, have also overlooked the greater heterogeneity of the

⁷⁷ Quoted in Bevis, *English Drama: Restoration and Eighteenth Century, 1660–1789* (London and New York: Longman, 1988), p. 118. See also *Theatre in Europe: A Documentary History—Restoration and Georgian England, 1660–1788*, ed. by David Thomas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 187–88.

⁷⁸ For more details and documentary evidences, see Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of Early Eighteenth Century Drama 1700–1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), pp. 8–19, Thomas, esp. pp. 180–82, and Hughes, esp. pp. 14–26.

Elizabethan audience. It is well-known that the fee for admission to the Elizabethan public theatre was low enough to attract even the lowest class of the nation and it really did. Statistics tells us that some '13 per cent of the accessible population in and around London' was the rate of steady theatre-goers in 1595,⁷⁹ while by the mid-eighteenth century the rate was dwindled to some 1.7 per cent.⁸⁰ It is undeniable that the Elizabethan audience was as varied as any in birth and education and far more so than the early eighteenth-century audience. Therefore, if the latter was heterogeneous, it was not the heterogeneity itself which caused all the problems in the theatre of that period.

It was much more a matter of power struggle than of simple heterogeneity, as a result of the loosening of the upper classes' directing power in theatrical and cultural activities of their time, along with the overall weakening of their 'patrician' role without as well as within the theatre.⁸¹ In this regard, E. P. Thompson's exposition of the theatricalisation of patrician 'authority' in the eighteenth-century 'auditorium of the theatre of class hegemony and control' ('Eighteenth-Century English Society', p. 150) is particularly pertinent to our understanding of the interrelation between theatre and politics in Fielding's time.

Their appearances have much of the studied self-consciousness of public theatre. The sword was discarded, except for ceremonial purposes; but the elaboration of wig and powder, ornamented clothing and canes, and even the rehearsed patrician gestures and the hauteur of bearing and expression, all were designed to exhibit authority to the plebs and to exact from them deference. [...] A great part of politics and law is always theater [*sic*]; once a social system has become 'set', it does not need to be endorsed daily by exhibitions of power (although occasional punctuations of force will be made to define the limits of the system's tolerance); what matters more is a continuing theatrical style. What one remarks of the eighteenth century is elaboration of this style and the self-consciousness with which it was deployed.

('Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture', p. 389)

⁷⁹ *The Revels History of Drama in English, III: 1576-1613*, ed. by J. Leeds Barroll and others (London: Methuen, 1975), p. 48.

⁸⁰ John Loftis, *Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959), p. 19.

⁸¹ See E. P. Thompson, 'Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture', *Journal of Social History*, 7 (1974), 382-405, and 'Eighteenth-Century English Society: Class Struggle without Class?', *Social History*, 3 (1978), 133-65.

Thompson aptly points out how this 'theatre of class hegemony' was reacted to by the 'counter-theater [*sic*] of the poor': 'Just as the rulers asserted their hegemony by a studied theatrical style, so the plebs asserted their presence by a theater of threat and sedition' ('Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture, p. 400). Similar contentions were daily enacted in the real theatre, too, where the most persistent disturbances throughout the earlier half of the eighteenth century came from the 'two widely separated segments of the audience, the footmen in the upper gallery and the beaux on the stage' (Hughes, p. 15): the one group violently asserting their right to be admitted into 'their' gallery and the other, usually 'members of the gentry or nobility' (p. 21), making their way behind the scenes or on the stage, 'motivated [...] by a "desire of distinction"' (p. 22).⁸²

Fielding was well acquainted with the theatre of authority. For one thing, he was perceptive of the theatrical style in which the great displayed authority by putting on 'powdered wigs' and 'ornamented clothing'. Thus Fielding's satire on the great generally counts on showing their 'appearances' as appearances and no more, thus exposing their counterfeit authority. More specifically, Fielding understands and portrays political authorities always by analogy with authors, especially theatrical authors, or their equivalents, as we shall see in appropriate chapters in this thesis. Naturally, emphases vary from one portrayal to another, as his different relations and attitudes to Walpole and to Lyttelton, for instance, have him attend to different aspects of political authority and the relation of ruler to ruled. What commonly underlies them, though, is Fielding's concerned awareness of the critical alienation of authors from authority. The prototype is a theatrical author, who as Fielding finds out himself has to cope with a set of limiting relationships in connection with contemporary theatre hegemony.

⁸² Colley Cibber remarks on this practice thus: 'As for those gentlemen that thrust themselves forward upon the stage before a crowded audience, as if they resolv'd to play themselves, and save the actors the trouble of presenting them, they indeed, as they are above instruction so they scorn to be diverted by it' (*Lady's Last Stake* (1708), Dedication, quoted in Hughes, pp. 21–22).

On entering the London theatre as a fledgling 'Hackney Writer' at the precise moment it was beginning to modernise itself as an unambiguously commercial venue, Fielding had problematic relationships, most importantly with 'the drama's patrons', and with entrepreneurial managers and licensing authorities, too. His debut was at Drury Lane in February 1728 with *Love in Several Masques*, a traditional five-act comedy, which 'survived only four nights' (Hume, p. 29). It was an indifferent start and followed by three consecutive rejections of his comedies by the managers at Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields.⁸³ Prompted by these humiliating experiences, Fielding composed his first burlesque farce, *The Author's Farce*, which made a stunning forty-one-night premiere at the Little Haymarket in 1730. The 'drama's patrons' were determined to countenance only farcical entertainments, preferably with some anti-government innuendos, and the managers wanted to fatten themselves by catering for them. 'What Fielding really wanted to write', Hume suggests, 'was harsh social satire' (p. 258). Of all his plays, *The Modern Husband* (1732) and *The Universal Gallant* (1735) came closest to this category and met with the cruellest receptions from the audience: the one 'hissed on the first night' and the other ending 'in a tumult of groans, catcalls, whistles, and horse-laughes' at each performance for a total of three nights.⁸⁴ Fielding's reaction to the fate of *The Universal Gallant* was particularly bitter:

The cruel Usage this poor Play hath met with, may justly surprize the Author, who in his whole Life never did an Injury to any one Person living. What could incense a Number of People to attack it with such an inveterate Prejudice, is not easy to determine; for Prejudice must be allowed, be the Play good or bad, when it is condemn'd unheard.⁸⁵

⁸³ *Don Quixote in England* and *The Temple Beau* were rejected at Drury Lane, and *The Wedding Day* by Rich at Lincoln's Inn Fields, although *The Temple Beau* managed to get staged in the newly opened theatre in Goodman's Fields in January 1730 (see Hume, pp. 44–46).

⁸⁴ Wilbur L. Cross, *The History of Henry Fielding*, 3 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1918), I, 120 and 171. See also Hume, p. 189.

⁸⁵ *The Universal Gallant: or, The Different Husbands* (London, 1735), Advertisement.

Indeed, one had to watch the audience's predilections carefully, in order to succeed in the contemporary theatrical world, and the record success of *The Beggar's Opera* (sixty two nights in the first season) was a surest pointer to the right direction. It is doubtful, though, whether Fielding was so 'ready' as Hume suggests 'to employ successful formulas' in the wake of *The Beggar's Opera* (p. ix). Despite the indifferent reception of *Love in Several Masques*, which in fact came to the stage during the first run of *The Beggar's Opera* at Lincoln's Inn Fields, Fielding tarried behind for two full years writing at least two more five-act comedies (*The Temple Beau* and *The Wedding Day*), while ballad opera imitations were already pouring in. It took the successive rejections of his comedies to teach Fielding once and for all where the audience's pleasures really lay and to come up with *The Author's Farce* in 1730. *The Author's Farce* is a dramatisation of Fielding's first years in the theatre, and the 'Author' Luckless's highly self-conscious concession reflects Fielding's to the 'Pleasures of the Town', which becomes the title of Luckless's inner puppet-show. His initial and lingering reluctance notwithstanding, Fielding's great success in succession to Gay attests that Fielding aptly catered for his audience. His *Pasquin* ran for sixty nights in its first season in 1736, just two nights short of the record sixty two of *The Beggar's Opera*. Given the audience's obsessive predilection for anti-government, that is, anti-Walpole satires, it seemed to follow that the more subversive a play was, the more lucrative it would turn out. No wonder Fielding's most profitable seasons coincided with his most aggressive ones. However, the example of *The Beggar's Opera*, Gay's broad assault on Walpole, was to be qualified by that of its suppressed sequel *Polly*, a reprisal on Walpole's part. Fielding himself experienced the intervention of government authority in the suppression of *The Grub-Street Opera* in 1731. Walpole, ever more watchful of the increasingly subversive theatre, eventually went as far as to enforce the Licensing Act in 1737. The Licensing Act resulted in depriving Fielding of 'his livelihood', and he was 'never again able to support himself as a man of letters' (Hume, p. 254).

A decade's engagement in the theatre supplies Fielding with the figure of the 'author on the stage', who is apparently the master of the stage but in fact 'the Audience's very humble Servant'.⁸⁶ Subject to the tyrannies of the audience on one hand and civil authorities on the other, this author on the stage appears critically lacking authority of any kind. Fielding certainly considers himself as such. Intriguingly enough, he manages to redesign the same figure into a burlesque version of the Prime Minister. Fielding's anti-Walpole plays cast the 'poet's foe' himself (Swift, 'To Mr. Gay', 3) as 'the author of a mighty farce', with whom he curiously identifies himself as the author of a 'little' farce (*Eurydice Hissed*, 26, 49). Likewise, either the author of a 'little' farce or the 'mighty' *farceur* is essentially a master of the stage, whether the stage of the Little Theatre at the Haymarket or the stage of the 'theater of hegemony'. Fielding's self-awareness as author centres on the figure of the master of a stage, or in other words, the 'master of a public house'. Hence Luckless the author-master of a puppet-show, Pillage the 'master of a playhouse', and the Author, alias 'Master of a public Ordinary', in *Tom Jones*. The same figure reappears every time Fielding thinks upon a civil authority, from Walpole, master of his kind of 'public house', that is, the House of Commons, to Lyttelton/Allworthy, master of Paradise Hall, to the 'Master' of Newgate in *Amelia*. At the last stage of his career, Fielding becomes a civil authority himself, in the capacity of a Justice of the Peace at Bow Street, to find in himself yet another master of the 'theater of the court' with 'powdered wigs' on. Ultimately, Fielding's problematic self-awareness as author without authority accompanies his 'Justice Business', too, in conducting which Fielding virtually concedes his limited authority to curb the crimes and vices rampant in his milieu.

The following chapters are organised in largely chronological order, but each chapter has an independent value, too, in that it deals with the distinctive features of

⁸⁶ *Don Quixote in England* (London, 1734), Introduction. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

Fielding's self-awareness as author at one or another stage of his career. Chapter I begins with an analysis of the realities of hungry authors as dramatised in *The Author's Farce* and the ambivalent feelings Fielding the novice 'Hackney Writer' exhibits towards the literary establishment embodied in the Scriblerians or Pope in particular, and towards the great as patrons of authors, especially Walpole the Prime Minister as (mock-)patron. It is followed by an account of the anti-Walpole plays at the Haymarket 1736–37, each in the form of a rehearsal by an 'Author' (of a farce), who represents at once Fielding and Walpole, with particular emphasis on the odd interaction between Fielding's concern for his own literary authority and his opposition formula to denounce Walpole's political authority. Chapter II continues to examine Fielding's characteristic intermixing of the issues of authorship and authority in his anti-Walpole satire in *The Champion* and *Jonathan Wild the Great Man*. Chapter III focuses on Fielding's thorough rebuttal of 'High People' in *Shamela* and *Joseph Andrews*, in the aftermath of his serious disillusion with his opposition patrons at Walpole's fall, which occasions Fielding to give full vent to his self-awareness as author in antagonistic terms to the great and his wishful imagining of authorship morally and financially independent of them. Chapter IV begins with drawing out Fielding's new predicament in the ministerial journals *The True Patriot* and *The Jacobite's Journal*, in terms of the obvious collision therein of his duty-bound vindication of his patrons now in the ministry and more fundamental concern for his authorial independence. It becomes Fielding's paramount concern at this juncture to disengage his literary identity and performances from his obligations to the patrons, especially George Lyttelton the patron of Fielding. This very issue comes to constitute the organising principle of the tensioned drama between the patron and the foundling protégé in *Tom Jones*, composed in the same period as the journals. Finally, Chapter V traces Fielding's despairing analysis of the menacing degeneracy of his society and culture in *Amelia* and *The Covent-Garden Journal*, in concession to his want of authority and ability to accomplish the Herculean project of correcting his

corrupt age, which completes his self-awareness as a mock-Hercules or an Alexander Drawcansir, the last of his 'Authors'.

Chapter I. The Author's Farce

How unhappy is the fate
To live by one's pate
And be forced to write hackney for bread!
An author's but a joke
To all manner of folk
Wherever he pops up his head, his head,
Wherever he pops up his head.

Though he mount on that hack,
Old Pegasus' back,
And of Helicon drink till he burst,
Yet a curse of those streams,
Poetical dreams,
They never can quench one's thirst, etc.

Ah, how should he fly
On fancy so high
When his limbs are in durance and hold?
Or how should he charm
With genius so warm,
When his poor naked body's acold, etc.

The Author's Farce, II. 3

1. *The Author's Farce*

The title of *The Author's Farce* registers the incongruity of an 'author' writing a 'farce', comparable to that of a 'beggar' composing an 'opera', and further implies that authorship is itself reduced to one ridiculous 'farce'. Strictly speaking, *The Author's Farce* is not a farce by genre, and what is meant by the Author Luckless's 'farce' is a puppet show, of a rather unusual kind, performed by actors not with real puppets. Generic distinction is meaningless in *The Author's Farce*, as Luckless himself says to Bookweight, 'You may call it an opera if you will, but I call it a puppet show'.¹ As we shall see later on, the same attitude descends, for instance, to Medley in *The Historical Register for the Year 1736*, who concludes his rehearsal

¹ *The Author's Farce*, ed. by Charles B. Woods (London: Edward Arnolds, 1967), II. 7. 24. Further references are given after quotations in the text. There is no scene division in Act III.

thus: 'so ends my play, my farce, or what you please to call it'.² Certainly Medley's 'what you please to call it' reminds us of John Gay's *What D'Ye Call It* (1715), to which Gay gives another facetious sub-title 'a Tragi-Comi-Pastoral Farce' (Preface, 9). Beyond its narrow generic notion, 'farce' designates the general state of the contemporary theatre, which has sold out its 'dignity' to every low, commercial entertainment and incurred a wholesale 'generic miscegenation'.³ Thus the prologue of *The Author's Farce* suggests that all contemporary tragedies and comedies have been but disguised farces.

Beneath the tragic or the comic name,
Farces and puppet shows ne'er miss of fame.
Since then in borrowed dress they've pleased the town,
Condemn them not, appearing in their own.
(Prologue, 31)

The potentially Scriblerian alignment notwithstanding, these lines sound no less apologetic than satirical, foretelling the nature of the drama to come, the farce of authorship.

Authors are hungry in *The Author's Farce*. When the first scene opens, the Author Luckless is seen dunned by his landlady Moneywood.

MONEYWOOD Could I have guessed that I had a poet in my house? Could I have looked for a poet under laced clothes?
LUCKLESS Why not, since you may often find poverty under them?
MONEYWOOD Do you make a joke of my misfortune, sir?
LUCKLESS Rather, my misfortune. I am sure I have a better title to poverty than you. You wallow in wealth, and I know not where to dine. (I. 1. 4)

² *The Historical Register for the Year 1736*, III. 275, in 'The Historical Register for the Year 1736' and 'Eurydice Hissed', ed. by William W. Appleton (London: Edward Arnolds, 1968). There is no scene division in the play, and references are therefore to the act and line numbers in this edition and hereafter given after quotations in the text.

³ Brean S. Hammond, 'Politics and Cultural Politics: The Case of Henry Fielding', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 16 (1992), 76-93 (p. 79).

Poetry is the surest passage to 'poverty', and 'those nine ragged jades the Muses' are the 'high roads to beggary', as Witmore later puts it (I. 5). It is later known that Luckless has sent his play to a lord, probably to solicit patronage and arrange a dedication, and also to 'Mr. Keyber', to get it staged.⁴ His servant Jack, however, brings him the news that 'his lordship [...] has such a prodigious deal of business, he begs to be excused' and the surly Keyber/Cibber 'made [...] no answer at all' (I. 4). With his last hope pending until the bookseller Bookweight turns up, Luckless has to find a way to 'dine' somehow.

LUCKLESS Jack!

JACK Sir.

LUCKLESS Fetch my hat hither.

JACK It is here, sir.

LUCKLESS Carry it to the pawnbroker's. And, in your way home, call at the cook's shop. Make haste. So, one way or other I find, my head must always provide for my belly. (I. 4. 8)

With its comic urgency, this scene catches the reality of a hungry author whose 'head' should somehow make provision for the 'belly'.

An author's dependence on the 'head' for 'bread' is rendered somewhat more poignant in the song of Blotpage, one of Bookweight's hacks (II. 3), particularly in the first stanza rhyming the two words.

How unhappy is the fate
To live by one's pate
And be forced to write hackney for bread!
An author's but a joke
To all manner of folk
Wherever he pops up his head, his head,
Wherever he pops up his head.

⁴ 'Keyber' is a Germanic distortion of (Colley) Cibber, a dig at his pro-Hanoverian connection. Fielding picks up the name 'Conney Keyber' again in fictitiously attributing *Shamela* to Cibber. See Woods, p. 14n, and the title-page and dedication of *An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews*, in *'Joseph Andrews' and 'Shamela'*, ed. by Douglas Brooks-Davies (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 313 and 317-18.

As Brean S. Hammond rightly points out, Blotpage's song as a whole sums up the 'gap between aspiration and actuality experienced by the hungry labourer in the growing literary marketplace' (p. 83). In effect, it becomes a sort of burlesque response to the prescriptive *Essay on Criticism*, disclosing the bathetic or even pathetic reality of hungry authorship.

Though he mount on that hack,
Old Pegasus' back,
And of Helicon drink till he burst,
Yet a curse of those streams,
Poetical dreams,
They never can quench one's thirst, etc.

Ah, how should he fly
On fancy so high
When his limbs are in durance and hold?
Or how should he charm
With genius so warm,
When his poor naked body's acold, etc.

Another hungry author, named 'Scarecrow', whose translation of the *Aeneid* Bookweight refuses to print 'at [his] own expense' but 'by subscription', asks the bookseller in return, 'pray, sir, at whose expense shall I eat?'.

BOOKWEIGHT That's an empty question.

SCARECROW It comes from an empty stomach, I'm sure.

BOOKWEIGHT From an empty head, I'm afraid. Are there not a thousand ways for a man to get his bread by?

SCARECROW I wish you would put me into one.

BOOKWEIGHT Why then, sir, I would advise you to come and take your seat at my tables. Here will be everything that is necessary provided for you. I am as great a friend to learning as the Dutch are to trade. No one can want bread with me who will earn it. (II. 6. 14)

Anything being preferable to 'starving', the famished author is more than willing to join the 'trade' in Bookweight's 'garret', his 'literatory',⁵ but that he is 'not qualified

⁵ Bookweight, as well as the bookseller 'Mr. Curry' in Luckless's puppet show, is modelled on Edmund Curll (Woods, Appendix B, p. 102). For more examples of hostile treatment of Curll in contemporary literature, see Rogers, pp. 26–28. Curll's print shop was caricatured as his 'literatory' in *The Grub-Street Journal* (26 October 1732). See David Saunders and Ian Hunter, 'Lessons from the "Literatory": How to Historicise Authorship', *Critical Inquiry*, 17 (1991), 479–509 (pp. 483–85).

for a translator'. Scarecrow timidly confesses that he understands no Latin and 'translated [Virgil] out of Dryden', to which Bookweight replies thus:

Not qualified! If I was an emperor thou shouldst be my prime minister. Thou art as well versed in thy trade as if thou hadst labored in my garret these ten years. Let me tell you, friend, you will have more occasion for invention than learning here: you will be sometimes obliged to translate books out of all languages (especially French) which were never printed in any language whatsoever. (II. 6. 35)

Bookweight makes it clear that what matters is not 'learning', which is, as revealed in the preceding scene (II. 5), camouflaged by some Latin and Greek mottoes provided for him by another author 'Index' at the rate of 6*d.* a Latin and 3*d.* a Greek motto (the latter is cheaper because 'nobody now understands Greek' nor discerns Index's abuse of it). It is just one of the 'mysteries' of Bookweight's 'trade', which Scarecrow exclaims 'abounds in mysteries'.

Into this 'literatory' comes Luckless, after his absence from the stage for several scenes. Earlier in Act I, Scene 5, Luckless did not give himself up to Witmore's sarcasm and ironic advice to 'write nonsense, write operas, write entertainments, write *Hurllothrumbos*, set up an *Oratory* and preach nonsense'. He remained naïve but sanguine enough to face Bookweight (I. 6) and Marplay and Sparkish (II. 1) in hopes of getting his play published and staged.⁶ Bookweight would not venture the 'great hazard' with 'young beginners', nor would Marplay, because 'there is nothing in it [Luckless's play] that will please the town'. His judgement is authoritative and not to be questioned by a beginner like Luckless, because 'a man who has been so long in a *trade* as I have should [...] understand the value of his *merchandise*, should [...] know what *goods* will best please the town' (II. 1: italics added). With the significant 'Fare ye well', Luckless leaves the stage to Marplay and Sparkish (II. 2) and to Bookweight and his hacks (II. 3–6), who confirm that writing is now nothing other than a hard 'trade' in every aspect. Back in Bookweight's 'literatory', Luckless is much wiser if

⁶ Marplay and Sparkish are modelled on Colley Cibber and Robert Wilks respectively, two of the then triumvirate at Drury Lane (Woods, p. 24n, and Appendix B, pp. 101, 107–08).

less sanguine, and responds to Bookweight's request for a prepayment, with a question as if rephrasing Marplay's words: 'Hast thou dealt in paper so long, and talk of money to a modern author?' (II. 7. 15). Beyond Bookweight's expectation, it is 'not [...] a play—nor a sermon' but a 'puppet show' that Luckless has brought him this time.

BOOKWEIGHT A puppet show!

LUCKLESS Aye, a puppet show, and is to be played this night in the Haymarket playhouse.

BOOKWEIGHT A puppet show in a playhouse!

LUCKLESS What have been all the playhouses a long time but puppet shows?

The self-conscious perfunctoriness with which Luckless here seems to explain away his concession to writing a puppet show contrasts well with his naïvety in the earlier scenes. A mixture of chagrin at the frustrating situation, especially for a 'young beginner' like him, and self-irony or even self-derision at his reduction to writing for 'bread' beneath his self-esteem, is evident in the way he deals with Bookweight and later with the player who insists that Luckless's puppet show is 'beneath the dignity of the stage'.

That may be; so is all farce, and yet you see a farce brings more company to a house than the best play that ever was writ, for this age would allow Tom Durfey a better poet than Congreve or Wycherley. Who would not then rather eat by his nonsense than starve by his wit? The lodgings of wits have long been in the air, and air must be their food nowadays. (III. 1. 6)

From this point onwards, the sense of 'performance' in tune with the uncomprehending audience, of knowing self-exposure to their unreliable judgement, ten to one a 'damnation', persists on Luckless's part throughout his presentation of the puppet show *The Pleasures of the Town*.

True to the 'advertisement' given by Jack Pudding, *The Pleasures of the Town* is a hotchpotch of 'abundance of singing and dancing and several other entertainments; also the comical and diverting humours of Somebody and Nobody, Punch and his

wife Joan' (II. 8. 5), barely held up by the nominal plot unfolding at the 'Court of Nonsense' on the other side of the Styx. When the said player, who stays on the stage with Luckless like the critic(s) in a rehearsal play, complains that he 'could make neither head nor tail of it' (III. 25), Luckless says, 'Why sir, the Goddess of Nonsense is to fall in love with the ghost of Signior Opera.' The player laughs at this 'new doctrine', but Luckless seems to ask, 'Why not? Is this not the nature of the "Pleasures of the Town"? Is this not what you want?' 'So much the likelier to please,' says Luckless. All that matters now is to 'please' the audience, and he seems intent on it in a consciously 'nonsensical' way and even going one better than ordinary stuff: 'since everyone has not time or opportunity to visit all the diversions of the town, I have brought most of them together in one' (III. 37).

Given its pell-mell line-up, *The Pleasures of the Town* is an endless medley of variations upon one and the same theme of the cultural degeneration, the reign of 'Nonsense' in England, though the scene of the show is supposed to be the nether world.

SAILOR There is a great number of passengers arrived from England, all bound to the Court of Nonsense.

CHARON Some plague, I suppose, or a fresh cargo of physicians come to town from the universities. Or perhaps a war broke out.

SAILOR No, no, these are all authors, and a war never sends any of them hither. (III. 138)

These 'authors' turn out to be Don Tragedio, Sir Farcical Comic, Dr. Orator, Signior Opera, Monsieur Pantomime, and Mrs Novel, personifications of virtually all current theatrical and literary forms.⁷ There follows a contest jumbled up indeed with 'abundance of singing and dancing' among these authors for Goddess Nonsense's favour, which comes to an abrupt end when Charon or rather the actor playing Charon comes upon the scene unscripted.

⁷ For individual models for these caricatures, see Woods, p. 45n and Appendix B.

LUCKLESS How now, Charon? You are not to enter yet.

CHARON To enter sir! Alackaday, we are all undone. Here is a constable and Mr. Murdertext the Presbyterian parson coming in.

Enter Murdertext and Constable.

CONSTABLE Are you the master of the puppet show?

LUCKLESS Yes, sir..

CONSTABLE Then you must along with me, sir. I have a warrant for you, sir.

LUCKLESS For what?

MURDERTEXT For abusing Nonsense, sirrah.

CONSTABLE People of quality are not to have their diversions libeled at this rate.

MURDERTEXT No, sirrah, nor the Saints are not to be abused neither.

(III. 684)

Overlooked by most critics, this scene is particularly relevant to our reading of Luckless's beleaguered status as author on the stage. At the simplest level, Luckless's staying on the stage as 'master of the puppet show' conforms to the practice in real puppet shows.⁸ More importantly, in the particular context of *The Author's Farce*, a drama about an author's reluctant concession to writing a farcical puppet show, it works as a 'distancing device' serviceable to Luckless in detaching himself from the degradation.⁹ Through this device, Luckless seems somehow to retain some distance from those he regards as real nonsense-writers like Samuel Johnson of Cheshire, the author of *Hurlothrumbo*. It is on this ground that most critics consider Luckless's performance as burlesque and satirical rather than imitative of truly farcical or nonsensical entertainments.¹⁰ What they fail to recognise, though, is the other facet of an author on the stage in both literal and metaphorical senses. In the above scene, Luckless's being on the stage as author, as 'master of the puppet show', does not mean his holding authority over the interpretation and reception of the given performance. On the contrary, it involves as its essential condition his exposure to the

⁸ See Peter Lewis, *Fielding's Burlesque Drama: Its Place in the Tradition* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1987), p. 95, and Antony J. Hassal, 'Fielding's Puppet Image', *Philological Quarterly*, 53 (1974), 71-83.

⁹ Albert J. Rivero, *The Plays of Henry Fielding: A Critical Study of His Dramatic Career* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989), p. 44.

¹⁰ Complaining about Fielding's casual use of the term 'farce', Leo Hughes argues that *The Author's Farce* is not a farce but a burlesque in *A Century of English Farce* (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 12. Of the difference between farce and burlesque, despite their common use of 'the extravagant, the exaggerated, even the grotesque', Hughes says that the former is 'aimed at mere entertainment', whereas the latter 'frequently overreaches itself in its desire to criticize' (p. 119).

wilful misrepresentation by the uncomprehending audience, 'people of quality' or no, and moreover, to the threat of legal intervention or even prosecution. In this regard, Gay's *Rehearsal at Goatham* (published in 1754 and not staged) renders another good case germane to the present issue. It is an allegorical dramatisation of the government intervention, probably on Cibber's petition, to ban the production of *Polly* in 1729, of which the memory must have been vivid in 1730, the year of the original *Author's Farce* (Lewis, pp. 83-84). Peter the master of the puppet show in Gay's play gets his rehearsal withdrawn, with only two lines spoken, by the 'hyper-sensitive and paranoid worthies [who] suspect that the puppet show is a veiled assault on themselves, designed to undermine their status and authority' (Lewis, p. 84). 'To what End hath a Man Riches and Power,' says Sir Headstrong Bustle, a caricature of Walpole, 'if he cannot crush the Wretches who have the Insolence to expose the Ways by which he got them! This is not to be borne!' (*The Rehearsal at Goatham*, Scene IX. 14). Though a much lesser authority than the Prime Minister, the Constable and Justice of the Peace in one in *The Author's Farce* threatens Luckless to similar effect. The 'mastery' of the 'master of the puppet show' is but titular, and both Luckless and Peter remain vulnerable to the 'paranoid' and arbitrary intervention of civil authority on top of the tyranny of the audience.

What Lawrence Lipking says of the peculiar alienation of authorship from any authority over textual interpretation is quite apposite to Luckless's case, if we translate the 'act of signing a text' below into that of appearing on the stage as author-master of a performance.

The act of signing a text makes authors vulnerable. They expose themselves in print, and anything they are may be used against them. [...] Some of the most popular authors, in fact, consider themselves the slaves of their readers, who always have the power to break the work with simple indifference. From this point of view the connection of authors with authoritarianism appears more a wish than a statement of fact.¹¹

¹¹ Lawrence Lipking, 'Life, Death, and Other Theories', in *Historical Studies and Literary Criticism*, ed. by Jerome J. McGann (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), pp. 180-98 (p. 181).



In *The Author's Farce*, dramatising the 'sordid reality' of early-eighteenth-century authorship, the 'wish' seems to be fulfilled through Luckless's restoration to his kingship of Bantam, which comes just in time to rescue him from the threatened legal prosecution and to avenge the Author-King on the mere constable: 'I hope your majesty will pardon a poor, ignorant constable. I did not know your worship, I assure you' (III. 851). As Lewis shows in detail, the 'wildly incredible' denouement of *The Author's Farce*, rejoining not only Luckless but Moneywood and Harriot (Moneywood's daughter and Luckless's sweetheart) and even Punch and Joan (characters from the puppet show), too, as the royal families of Bantam and Old Brentford, makes a burlesque of the denouements of sentimental plays (p. 104). Still the denouement equally allows a wish fulfilling fantasy on the Author's part, a flight from the 'sordid reality' to an imaginary kingdom where reigns the Author- or Poet-King, not the audience nor the great 'people of quality', even if only too soon the fantasy is disrupted by the burlesque epilogue, which presents four poets sweating in vain to make up an epilogue to please the audience.

Given the transformation of the Author Luckless, from an aspirant, presumably talented novice playwright, to a disillusioned, self-conscious puppet master, to the King of Bantam, and back to the awkward Author with a cat to 'act the epilogue in dumb show' (Epilogue, 56),¹² it is not easy to pin down his character in either/or terms, although most critics have so far tried to understand him in that way, especially with regard to his relation to Fielding. Richard Bevis's and Peter Lewis's views best exemplify the two opposite conclusions reached by this kind of discussion. Bevis stresses the importance of *The Author's Farce*

not only in marking Fielding's shift from regular comedy to play-within-play burlesque, but also, within the later tradition, in the development of the normative Author who may instruct us and direct the satire instead of receiving it. [...] In act 3, [...] he [Luckless] produces a puppet show ('The Author's Farce') at the Little Theatre and becomes Fielding's surrogate, at

¹² Woods points to the variation in the prefixes to Luckless's speeches in the first edition (p. xiin), and standardises them as 'Luckless' in his edition, while retaining 'Author' for the last two in the epilogue.

least to the extent that both men are using one mode and venue simultaneously to satirize theatrical and literary fashions.¹³

In fact, Bevis sees Fielding's Authors mainly as his 'surrogates' and forefathers of the 'normative' narrator in *Tom Jones*, whom he identifies with 'that great commentator on life in general, the persona of Augustan periodical essay, from Addison and Steele to Fielding's own *Champion* (1739–) and beyond' (p. 68). In contrast to Bevis's total identification of Luckless with Fielding, Lewis only partially admits Fielding's self-dramatisation through Luckless and eventually argues that

Harry Luckless must not be identified with Henry Fielding despite certain parallels between them; Fielding is careful to distance himself from his comic hero, who is therefore not a self-portrait but a 'puppet' in Fielding's larger 'puppet-show' of *The Author's Farce*. (Lewis, p. 93)

In so far as Lewis's strategy in analysing Fielding's Authors is to read each of them either as a Bayes figure or as its antithesis, his view of Luckless relies as much as Bevis's on the simplifying dichotomy of the subject/object of satire. Consequently, neither critic reaches a fuller understanding of the complexity in the relation between Fielding and his Authors as well as in his delineation of authorship in general, which is not rendered in purely satirical terms.

As for the 'certain parallels' between Henry Fielding and Harry Luckless, they are both author-turned *farceurs*, relegated to the Little Theatre at the Haymarket after the humiliating rejection by Cibber/Marplay at Drury Lane. *The Author's Farce* is Fielding's first departure from the standard five-act comedy, a departure occasioned by recent rejections of Fielding's plays (*Don Quixote in England*, *The Wedding Day*, and *The Temple Beau*) at Drury Lane.¹⁴ As we can guess from his repeated knockings at the door of Drury Lane in spite of rejection after rejection, the proper stage and

¹³ Richard Bevis, 'Fielding's Normative Authors: *Tom Jones* and the Rehearsal Play', *PQ*, 69 (1990), 55–70 (p. 58).

¹⁴ See Robert D. Hume, *Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728–1737* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 44–46.

company Fielding presumed himself writing for were those at Drury Lane, where his first comedy *Love in Several Masques* was somehow staged for four nights from 16 February 1728. Only when he failed there, Fielding would, as he did with *The Wedding Day*, turn to Lincoln's Inn Fields, where the 'Harlequin' Rich's management was probably not more friendly to five-act comedies, especially by beginners.¹⁵ *The Temple Beau* managed to be staged in the newly opened theatre in Goodman's Fields in January 1730, but in April, this unpatented theatre became temporarily closed on petition of the Lord Mayor and the Aldermen, who were always opposed to the opening of any theatre in their sober business area.¹⁶ Fielding was in want of another venue and the Little Theatre at the Haymarket came up as the only choice.

The repertory at the Little Haymarket is summed up by Hume as 'an odd combination of earnest amateur efforts and rollicking farces' (p. 60), more open to new and experimental plays than at Drury Lane or Lincoln's Inn Fields. This latter feature, however, should not mislead us about the nature of the Little Haymarket, because even the 'innovative' stamp was due less to any management policy or principled opposition to the patent theatres, not to mention to the government, than to its material exigencies. The Little Haymarket was then operated by different groups of 'fringe professionals' season after season, and they offered no essentially different bills from those at the patent theatres, capitalising more often than not on the hits from the patent theatres at the cheaper rate by a shilling per seat (Hume, p. 54). Also they inclined to risk new plays, whose obvious advantages (for instance, novelty and variety values) only the conservative patentees were wary of investing in. Even so, the managers at the patent theatres, like Marplay in *The Author's Farce*, were hardly backward in pandering to the 'Pleasures of the Town'. It can be said, in the vocabulary of *The Author's Farce*, that while the patent theatres staged tragedies and comedies in shabby disguises, the Little Haymarket offered farces in their less

¹⁵ For the patent theatres' repertory policy of particular hostility to new plays and playwrights, see Hume, pp. 14–20.

¹⁶ See Wilbur L. Cross, *The History of Henry Fielding*, 3 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1918), I, 78, and Hume, pp. 39–44 (esp. p. 40).

disguised forms with a more open view to making a profit on them (Hume, pp. 52–61).

Fielding's move to the Little Haymarket, where *Hurlothrumbo* ran its marvellous thirty-three-night première in the preceding season to that of *The Author's Farce*, lending its title as a synonym for nonsense thereafter, promised 'little inspiration' for him (p. 60). It was anything but an exaltation for 'a well-educated, classically trained aristocratic writer' (Hammond, p.78), who not only thought himself obliged to write legitimate drama for the legitimate stage but sought after the Scriblerian distinction, particularly in the earliest years of his career. Not only did his literary career happen to open at the 'peak of the Augustan moment', but he made a conscious and consistent 'application for admission into the Augustan circle' with a series of attempts.¹⁷ His first poem *The Masquerade* appeared in public with the claim that it was written by 'Lemuel Gulliver, Poet Laureat to the King of Lilliput' on 30 January 1728, the next day, by coincidence, to the opening of *The Beggar's Opera* at Lincoln's Inn Fields (Battestin, *Life*, p. 62). It was *The Author's Farce*, with the pseudonym 'H. Scriblerus Secundus' on its title-page, that made the said 'application' even more obvious, and the pseudonym continued to be attached to Fielding's other productions, except the five-act *Rape upon Rape*, for the Little Haymarket. Fielding's relation to the Scriblerians, those 'figures of literary authority who reigned during his formative years' (Hunter, p. 11), and especially to Pope, is indeed a complex one and remains such throughout, so that as late in his career as 1752, the tentative aggrandisement of 'King ALEXANDER, sirnamed POPE' as last absolute monarch in the 'Commonwealth of Literature' (*The Covent-Garden Journal*, No. 23) seems to make a belittling contrast to Alexander Drawcansir, the Author of the journal.

Fielding's initial bid in *The Masquerade* was essentially an attempt by a débutant author to impress himself on the contemporary literary world with the name 'Lemuel Gulliver' borrowed from Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, which had stormed it less than

¹⁷ J. Paul Hunter, *Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), pp. 9–10.

two years before. It was an act of borrowing 'literary authority', not without an implicit admission of the younger writer's at least partial if not total sympathy with the ideological standpoint of the predecessor. In *The Author's Farce*, Fielding's borrowing of a Scriblerian pseudonym comes with a new urgency, because of his concerned awareness that *The Author's Farce* will probably reduce him, especially in the eyes of the Scriblerians, to the degraded position of a nonsense writer succeeding to Samuel Johnson of Cheshire the author of *Hurlotrumbo*, regardless of his own professed contempt for it (I. 5. 33 and III. 545). By recourse to the Scriblerian affiliation, Fielding seeks to detach himself from his writing of a farce.

Fielding's gestures and efforts to affiliate himself with the Scriblerians raise more questions than that for two main reasons. First, the Scriblerians, especially Pope, would regard Fielding 'as a precocious upstart and a Grub Street hack'.

Pope in particular became rather hostile to Fielding after initially ignoring him, and the attacks on Fielding in *The Grub-Street Journal* have usually been thought to have had Pope's backing or at least to have voiced his opinion. (Lewis, p. 87)¹⁸

The unbridgeable political gap between the Jacobite and Catholic Pope and the Hanoverian and Whig Fielding may well have influenced their mutual mistrust, in spite of their joining in the Broad-Bottom opposition to Walpole in the late 1730s. Secondly and more importantly, Fielding's attitude to the Scriblerians, and again especially to Pope, was not simple by any means, for all his genuine admiration for their literary achievement. Cleary rightly infers that

it seems more than possible that Fielding was not immune [...] to the envy and sensitivity to imagined or actual rebuffs that young writers are prone to feel toward established authors and the socially and intellectually desirable, but often impenetrable, circles in which they move. A very young man hoping to establish and enrich himself as a writer in a literary epoch dominated by the Scriblerians—Pope, Swift, Bolingbroke, and Gay—might almost be forgiven such feelings, particularly if, as it happened in Fielding's case, his first play

¹⁸ Hunter ascribes Pope's problematic view of Fielding to uncertainty rather than complete contempt (pp. 8–9).

appeared with modest success during the first triumphant initial run of Gay's *Beggar's Opera*. (p. 17)

Fielding's ambivalence towards the Scriblerians or even 'anti-Scriblerian jealousy' as Cleary puts it (p. 24), reveals itself as important an aspect as his tentative Scriblerian claim in *The Author's Farce*, where Luckless's dramatic situations reflect Fielding's genuine frustration at the literary milieu particularly hostile to young authors like him. As we have seen, both Marplay and Bookweight reject Luckless's play mainly because he lacks the 'great reputation' of an established author. Thus Bookweight tells Luckless:

Why, had you a great reputation I might venture. But truly, for young beginners it is a very great hazard. For indeed the reputation of the author carries the greatest sway in these affairs. The town have been so fond of some authors that they have run them up to infallibility, and would have applauded them even against their senses. (I. 6. 38)

It is almost beyond doubt that the Scriblerians are those authors applauded by the town 'even against their senses'. Another significant piece of evidence disclosing Fielding's ambivalence towards Pope is found in the already mentioned episode of the translator Scarecrow. The sagacious Bookweight acquaints the translator of Virgil thus:

You may try by subscription if you please, but I would not advise you, for that bubble is almost down. People begin to be afraid of authors since they have writ and acted like stockjobbers. (II. 6. 7)

Both this and the former passages may be just general 'mysteries' in Bookweight's trade, and indeed similar complaints about the practice of publication by subscription are to turn up on various occasions in Fielding's later works, most notably, for instance, in the story of the ex-author Wilson in *Joseph Andrews* and rather briefly in the episode of Booth's encounter with a subscription-seeking author in *Amelia*. The contemporary audience of *The Author's Farce*, though, could hardly fail to be

reminded of Pope's publication by subscription of his translations of Homer (the last two volumes of *Odyssey* came out in 1726), which earned him the fabulous sum of £9,000 and no end of envy and slander. If Pope is not meant to number among the literary 'stockjobbers', he is at least responsible for the 'bubble' of publication by subscription, which would not be available, even if the 'bubble' were not 'down', for a beginner without a good connection or reputation. The contrast is unmistakable between the prestigious translator of Homer and the farcically desperate translator of Virgil out of Dryden:

SCARECROW Sir, I have brought you a libel against the ministry.
 BOOKWEIGHT Sir, I shall not take anything against them—(*aside*) for I have
 two in the press already.
 SCARECROW Then, sir, I have another in defense of them.
 BOOKWEIGHT Sir, I never take anything in defense of power.
 SCARECROW I have a translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*, with notes on it. (II. 6. 1)

Whatever Pope may have thought of his own 'scribbling', this kind of 'writing for bread' was what he was fortunately exempt from, 'thanks to Homer', and he was *the* great and rich poet to the less fortunate, inclined to write any stuff not to starve, whom the greater part of Fielding's sympathy seems to stay with. After all, Fielding had his own 'empty stomach' to fill.

The Scriblerian association is the single most important gambit that Fielding tried in his junior years to rise above the multitude of hackney authors, but not necessarily the only one. Within a month of the publication of *The Masquerade* under the Scriblerian pseudonym, his first comedy *Love in Several Masques* was published (23 February 1728) with a dedication to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. As Fielding's second cousin and an unequivocal friend to Walpole, Lady Mary was 'Fielding's most promising potential avenue to patronage', particularly to that of the Great Man himself (Cleary, p. 16).¹⁹ What happens in *The Author's Farce* is that he gives out his

¹⁹ For Fielding's courtship for Walpole's patronage in these years, see Battestin, *Life*, pp. 78–80, Goldgar, p. 100, Cleary, pp. 13–26, and J. A. Downie, 'Walpole, "the Poet's Foe"', in *Britain in the Age of Walpole*, ed. by Jeremy Black (London: Macmillan, 1984), pp. 182–84.

bitterness towards the current patronage system itself, which seems to him to force authors' parasitic dependence on the great and rich. It is put into one of Witmore's disparaging speeches thus:

I cannot bear to hear the man I love ridiculed by fools and idiots. To see a fellow who, had he been born a Chinese, had been some low mechanic, toss up his empty noddle with a scornful disdain of what he has not understood, and women abusing what they have neither seen nor read from an unreasonable prejudice to an honest fellow whom they have not known. If thou wilt write against all these reasons, get a patron, be pimp to some worthless man of quality, write panegyrics on him, flatter him with as many virtues as he has vices, and don't pretend to stand thyself against a tide of prejudice and ill nature which would have overwhelmed a Plato or a Socrates.
(I. 5. 39)

Without Witmore's sarcasm, Luckless also agrees that 'too much truth is on your side', and as we already know from the preceding scene (I. 4), Luckless has approached a lord for patronage and got rejection with a routine excuse that 'his lordship [...] has a prodigious deal of business'. If there should be any particular model for the lord, Walpole seems the likeliest candidate, for the only known courtship by Fielding for any patronage before 1730 was directed at Walpole through Lady Mary. To be sure, Walpole was still a commoner in 1730, and there is no known evidence that shows Fielding ever approached him with any play before he dedicated *The Modern Husband* to the Prime Minister in 1732. One external piece of evidence, however, the half-ironic and half-serious poem 'To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Walpole' (written in 1730 and published in the *Miscellanies* in 1743), followed by a sequel written in 1731, indicates at least that during the first couple of years in Fielding's career Walpole's patronage was what he mostly angled for, so that it was also Walpole who could pique the disappointed author to that extent. The poem also discloses that Fielding's attitude to Walpole was already sufficiently problematised by his wry view of the unwelcome servility an author should bear both in begging and in receiving patronage.

If not exactly a direct complaint about Walpole's neglecting of his overtures, Fielding's bitterness towards the current patronage system can be understood as his

caustic view of the system in general, which was shared by many of his contemporaries and aggravated by his personal experience with Walpole. As I have mentioned in the Introduction, the aristocratic connection through patronage, dedication, or subscription was constantly sought after by the majority of contemporary authors, whatever their real attitude towards the system or the patronising class may have been. In realistic terms, the reward therefrom, for instance, in the form of a 'Sinecure' as Fielding asks in the poem of 1730, would at least spare the recipient the more humiliating task of hack writing for the literary marketplace, although, as noted earlier, the general attitude to patronised authors was changing to one of contempt. In addition, there was still the attraction for authors to 'bask in reflected cultural glory' and thereby to distinguish themselves from those struggling 'in the mires of Grub Street', as Downie puts it.²⁰ In this context, Fielding's dedication of *Love in Several Masques* to Lady Mary was another gambit to advertise his superiority to an ordinary 'Hackney Writer', although he ironically referred to himself as such. As we have seen, such effort was concurrent with his application for the Scriblerian affiliation, one inevitably undermining the other. Walpole's patronage, if granted at all, would certainly have earned Fielding an even greater share of the Scriblerian satire, which he already received to a considerable extent without it. Then Fielding might well ask, like the hungry translator Scarecrow, 'But, pray, sir, at whose expense shall I eat?'

Yet Fielding was no more enthusiastic about authors' dependence on 'people of quality' than he was about the 'greatest sway' of the Scriblerians in the literary world. His grudge against the great is evident in *The Author's Farce* and much deeper than his jaundiced view of the literary great men, for whom his true admiration seems to get the better of his 'jealousy' as years go on and with whom, Hammond argues, he shares 'the same ideological formation' in 'cultural politics' if not in real politics (p. 91). Fielding's warfare with Walpole was due to open sooner or later, and as early as

²⁰ Pat Rogers, 'Book Dedications in Britain 1700–1799: A Preliminary Survey', *BJECS*, 16 (1993), 213–33 (p. 229), and J. A. Downie, *Robert Harley and the Press: Propaganda and Public Opinion in the Age of Swift and Defoe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 14.

1730, his ironic begging for Walpole's 'Sinecure' demonstrates just enough of his antipathy to the great, mixed with his derision at his own position as author, greater than the great in fantasy but abject in reality.

The Family that dines the latest,
Is in our Street esteem'd the greatest;
But latest Hours must surely fall
Before him who ne'er dines at all.
Your Taste in Architect, you know,
Hath been admir'd by Friend and Foe;
But can your earthly Domes compare
To all my Castles—in the Air?
We're often taught it doth behove us
To think those greater who're above us.
Another Instance of my Glory,
Who live above you twice two Story,
And from my Garret can look down
On the whole Street of *Arlington*. [...]
Nor in the Manner of Attendance
Doth your great Bard claim less Ascendance.
Familiar you to Admiration,
May be approach'd by all the Nation:
While I, like the Mogul in *Indo*,
Am never seen but at my Window.
If with my Greatness you're offended,
The Fault is easily amended.
For I'll come down, with wond'rous Ease,
Into whatever Place you please.²¹

Fielding's imagining of himself 'like the Mogul in *Indo*' stands in the same context as Luckless's ascension to the kingship of Bantam, and precisely foretells the name 'the Great Mogul' he assumes as impresario at the Little Haymarket in the seasons 1736–37. All these are 'more a wish than a statement of fact', part of what Hammond terms as the 'glorious class-based revenge fantasy' (p. 91), which will best work in Fielding's opposition writings but significantly disturb his relationship with his Broad-Bottom patrons, especially from *The True Patriot* onwards, if not before.

What underlies Fielding's problematic attitude to both political and literary great men in *The Author's Farce* is the sense of undue frustration on the part of a young author, whose claim to literary fame or authority is at the point of turning void in the

²¹ 'To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Walpole', 17, 37, in *Miscellanies by Henry Fielding, Esq; Volume One*, ed. by Henry Knight Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972).

face of the reality of authorship as 'trade'. Those authors in the bookseller's 'garret' especially drive home the reduction of authorship to a 'trade' in every aspect, as if to anticipate James Ralph's more radical statement in his *Case of Authors by Profession or Trade Stated*:

there is no Difference between the Writer in his Garret, and the Slave in the Mines; but that the former has his Situation in the Air, the latter in the Bowels of the Earth: Both have their Tasks assigned them alike: Both must drudge and starve; and neither can hope for Deliverance. The Compiler must compile; the Composer must compose on; sick or well; in Spirit or out; whether furnish'd with Matter or not; till by the joint Pressure of Labour, Penury and Sorrow, he has worn out his Parts, his Constitution, and all the little Stock of Reputation he had acquir'd among *the Trade*; who were All, perhaps, that ever heard of his Name. (p. 22)

As well as the bookseller's department, the whole theatrical affair is trusted in the hands of another mercenary 'tradesman' Marplay, authors 'act like stockjobbers' in taking subscriptions and then failing to keep their words, and patronage is a deal between patron and author as Witmore disparages. In *The Author's Farce*, we remark Fielding's anxiety about such degradation of authorship given its first and probably most intense expression, foreshadowing the notion of the 'Trade' of 'Authoring' with its 'Mysteries or Secrets' in *Joseph Andrews* (II. 1) and the 'poetical Trade' in *Tom Jones* (XII. 1). The Author Luckless is important, but not simply because he is a surrogate through whom Fielding can satirise the cultural degeneration of his age and distinguish himself above, say, the hack authors in Bookweight's garret or even the farcical authors at the Court of Nonsense, although Luckless does play such a role for Fielding. The point is that Luckless is no less Fielding as degraded *farceur* than as 'author' with the satirist's detachment and authority, and reveals his concerned awareness of his own complicity with those authors he ridicules. Both Fielding's multiple screening of himself from his first 'farce' with H. Scriblerus Secundus, Harry Luckless, and perhaps the dead poet in the Styx scene, too (III. 92ff),²² and the

²² For another similar example, in a dream vision in *The Champion* (24 March 1740), Fielding presents himself as dead and 'd—mned' author, with his characteristic long 'chin', in dispute with Mercury over the fare for Charon's ferry at the Styx.

ambivalent characterisation of Luckless reflect Fielding's fundamental inability to detach himself completely from the hungry authors writing 'hackney for bread'. Fielding sees himself on the stage of the ongoing farce of authorship, where one author is as much a clown, a 'laughing Stock' as another, as will be further dramatised in his rehearsal *Authors*.

2. Fielding and the Authors

After all, Fielding's first farce rewarded him with the rare forty-one-night première, a substantial success his two earlier, more ambitious regular comedies had failed to achieve. Such was the 'Town's' determination to have their 'Pleasures' even at their own expense, or as Bookweight put it, 'against their senses', that the presumably chastising author was tamed into writing and staging another farcical burlesque *Tom Thumb*, as afterpiece to *The Author's Farce* into its second month of run, obviously with the view of boosting and making the most of its popularity. *Tom Thumb* scored such 'a riotous success' (Hume, p. 69) that, according to one 'Bavius' in *The Grub-Street Journal* (11 June 1730), it 'raised the envy of some unsuccessful Poet against the Author'. For some, *Tom Thumb* secured Fielding a place, as it were, at the 'Court of Nonsense', especially alongside Colley Cibber and Samuel Johnson of Cheshire the author of *Hurlothrumbo*, as in the following article in *The Grub-Street Journal* (18 November 1731):

That he [Cibber]'s incomparable, yet must we own,
Because he chanc'd to please the fickle Town?
Then fiddling J— might some merit claim,
And *Huncamunca* rival him in fame.²³

²³ See *Henry Fielding: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by Ronald Paulson and Thomas Lockwood (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), pp. 28–30. 'Huncamunca' is the princess to King Arthur in *Tom Thumb*, given to Tom as prize for saving the kingdom from giants. An interesting anecdote with relation to the reception of *Tom Thumb* goes that it occasioned one of Swift's two laughs in life (Paulson and Lockwood, p. 73).

Though a pure coincidence, the ironic reference to 'brave *Tom Thumb*' in the same poem would have been a riposte to the no less ironic 'brave Gay' in Fielding's 'Original Song Written on the Appearance of the Beggar's Opera', which was not published until 1787.²⁴ The uncertain Scriblerian Secundus 'made a tremendous step forward as a would-be professional dramatist' (Hume, p. 70).

Fielding's successive hits at the Haymarket thus earned him something of 'fame', the 'reputation' Bookweight found lacking in Luckless. Now the hitherto disobliging Drury Lane renewed interest in Fielding, especially as the managers were softening towards new plays, seeing they were in great demand in the increasingly competitive situation of the London theatrical world (Hume, pp. 104-10). Despite the hostile treatment he incurred in *The Author's Farce*, Colley Cibber, says Hume, 'was a ruthless pragmatist', and 'if Fielding's plays could put money in management's pocket, then management would stage his plays, past pique notwithstanding' (p. 112). Fielding returned to Drury Lane 'as a prize catch' in 1732 (p. 200), to continue to work there under several managements until the 1735 season. Back at Drury Lane, Fielding staged a couple of five-act comedies, *The Modern Husband* (1732) and *The Universal Gallant* (1735), along with *The Miser* (1733), a five-act adaptation of Molière's *L'Avare* (Battestin, *Life*, p. 163), encouraged by the success of *The Mock Doctor* (1732), an afterpiece translation of Molière's *Médecin malgré Lui*, and several irregular pieces. Hume is probably right in saying that 'what Fielding really wanted to write was harsh social satire' in the legitimate five-act form, to which category belong *The Modern Husband* and *The Universal Gallant* (p. 258).²⁵ To his exasperation again, whereas most of those lighter pieces turned out successful, the two most ambitious and serious mainpieces by Fielding, now no longer a nonentity, met with ill receptions: *The Modern Husband* ran 13 nights at première (Hume, p. 124), after being 'hissed on the first night' (Cross, I, 120), which was a barely decent but clearly

²⁴ The 'Song' is reprinted in Howard P. Vincent, 'Early Poems by Henry Fielding', *Notes and Queries*, 184 (1943), 159-60. For comments on this song, see Battestin, *Life*, pp. 61-62, and Cleary, p. 17.

²⁵ Hume proposes to classify Fielding's plays into five categories: traditional comedy, serious satire, entertainment, burlesque, and topical satire (Table 4, p. 257).

disappointing record after the smash hits of *The Author's Farce* and *Tom Thumb*, and the case of *The Universal Gallant* was even catastrophic, ending up with three hissed performances (Hume, p. 189). As cited in the introduction, Fielding's remark upon the 'cruel Usage' of *The Universal Gallant* reveals that he felt particularly bitter about the embarrassing failure of one of his most painstaking works, although he was no stranger at all to the audience's tyranny. Fielding was no longer wanted at Drury Lane, and as in 1730, he approached John Rich, now the owner of two theatres, one at Lincoln's Inn Fields and the other at Covent Garden, whose rebuff at this juncture, referred to in the dedication of *Tumble-Down Dick*, would result in his replacement of the by then retired Cibber as Fielding's perennial target from *Pasquin* onwards. We find a significant parallel between Fielding's situation in 1729–30 and in 1735–36, and 'this time,' says Battestin, 'having had enough of the reluctant managers at Drury Lane and Covent Garden, he ensured almost complete control over the production by turning manager himself' (p. 192). It is a disputable point, though, in what sense or to what extent Fielding held 'almost complete control' at the Haymarket, a question quite relevant to the main issue of this section analysing the Authors Fielding created at the Haymarket. One thing is certain: all the five productions in this 'last and greatest phase' of Fielding's theatrical career (Hume, p. 200) were written in the so-called rehearsal format, displaying his renewed and even more consistent interest in the character of the 'author on the stage' he had first employed fully in *The Author's Farce* and thereafter only partially in the introductions or inductions of several plays.

Of Fielding's choice of the 'Great Mogul' as his new managerial pseudonym, Battestin says that it was 'calculated [...] to mock the reputations of his rival managers as "Stage Tyrants"' (p. 192). This is quite true, but what is often forgotten is that by turning a manager or impresario himself, Fielding made a significant step further into the sordid theatrical 'trade'. From his eight years' vicissitudes in the theatre, he certainly knew that he was now getting more directly involved in financial matters in running a theatre and company of actors, in tough competition, and that on clearly disadvantageous terms, with the patent theatres. If it meant something of

independence, it nonetheless stiffened his subjection to the paying public, whose 'Pleasures' he had to observe even more closely than before, to vie with the other managers ruthlessly catering to them. If it meant a smart chance to 'mock' them and thus to pay off his old scores with them, it also blurred the line between Fielding and a man like Rich. In so far as they were competitors in one market, providing virtually the same wares, simple mocking, from a superior point of view, was out of the question. Accordingly, the apparent mocker or satirist grows even more conscious of this complicity. The simple fact, first of all, that Fielding uses the sophisticatedly self-referential rehearsal format throughout his repertory at the Haymarket evidences his enhanced self-consciousness. Furthermore, the way he presents the rehearsals and their Authors points less to the 'complete control' they hold over their respective rehearsals than to the various and uncontrollable interruptions and obstacles coming in their way, and less to one Author's superiority over another (for instance, Fustian's to Trapwit in *Pasquin*) than to the difficulty of distinguishing one Author from another.

In *Pasquin*, Fielding makes a significant departure from the standard rehearsal format, handed down from the Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal* to its successors,²⁶ and also from his own *Author's Farce*, which is no rehearsal play in itself, by staging two Authors together in an illuminating interaction with each other. As appears on its title-page, *Pasquin* is made up of two rehearsals of 'A COMEDY call'd THE ELECTION; And a TRAGEDY call'd *THE LIFE AND DEATH OF COMMON SENSE*', the one by Trapwit and the other by Fustian.²⁷ There is also a critic named Sneerwell, but he does not turn up until Trapwit's rehearsal is over. Thus Fustian plays the part of a critic, while he is waiting for his own rehearsal to begin after Trapwit's. Fustian's comments on Trapwit's comedy are mostly deprecating, and being the more conventional Bayes of the two, Trapwit appears to deserve them. As

²⁶ See Lewis, Chs. 2–4, for an account of this tradition before Fielding.

²⁷ Given the want of a modern critical edition of *Pasquin*, the first edition (London, 1736) is used as text in my thesis. Each act in *Pasquin*, as in *The Historical Register*, comprises one scene, and the first edition shows no line numbers, so that references are to the act and page numbers in this edition and given after quotations in the text.

soon as Fustian's rehearsal begins, though, Trapwit also reveals his contempt for Fustian in asides, which in effect calls for our beginning to doubt whether there is any essential difference between these mutually contemptuous Authors. Trapwit soon disappears from the stage, leaving the critical role to Sneerwell, but Fustian's own capacity as author continues to be critically reappraised, because of the incongruity between his criticism and his practice. Fielding further explores this new dimension between Authors, when he later adds *Tumble-Down Dick* as afterpiece to *Pasquin*, grafting the drama of the mainpiece on to that of the afterpiece by making the third rehearsal by Machine begin where Fustian's ends. Fustian stays on the stage to watch Machine's 'entertainment' rehearsal, and the ensuing interaction between them sheds more light on the curious interrelationship among all three Authors.

From the very beginning, Trapwit is introduced to the audience through the following description by one of the players, suggesting his typical situation of being constantly chased by duns and bailiffs everywhere:

1ST PLAYER When does the Rehearsal begin?

2D PLAYER I suppose we shall hardly Rehearse the Comedy this Morning; for the Author was Arrested as he was going home from *King's Coffee-house*; and, as I heard, it was for upwards of Four Pound: I suppose he will hardly get Bail. (I, p. 1)

Somehow he manages to turn up at his rehearsal, saying 'I assure you, Sir, I had much difficulty to get hither so early' (I, p. 3). The tone is set, so far as Trapwit is concerned, so that the implied flutter of his penurious living is going to persistently deflate and farcicalise his self-conceit and assumed seriousness on the stage. Later when his rehearsal ends, Trapwit tries to excuse himself from attending Fustian's, claiming that 'I am to read my Play to-day to six different Companies of Quality' (III, p. 35), which is doubtful, judging from what he has hitherto been. Even if it be true, it is most unlikely that his comedy should obtain their approbation, as Trapwit himself knows very well from his past experiences. Asked about his dedication, Trapwit answers thus:

TRAPWIT I have none, Sir.

FUSTIAN How, Sir, no Dedication?

TRAPWIT No, Sir; for I have dedicated so many Plays, and received nothing for them, that I am resolved to trust no more: I'll let no more Flattery go out of my Shop without being paid before-hand.

FUSTIAN Sir, Flattery is so cheap, and every Man of Quality keeps so many Flatterers about him, that e'gad, our Trade is quite spoil'd; but if I am not paid for this Dedication, the next I write shall be a satirical one; if they won't pay me for opening my Mouth, I'll make them pay me for shutting it. (III, p. 38)

Both Authors, rarely in agreement with each other on any other issue, seem to have much in common at least in this respect, and the language of a tradesman is remarkable in Trapwit's complaint and Fustian's rejoinder as well. In fact, the implication of this scene is two-fold. It discovers the tradesmen underneath these Authors, whom Fielding should reproach in principle but his own share of similar experiences makes him incapable of categorically condemning, as we have seen in *The Author's Farce*. Thus 'every Man of Quality' is declaimed against as responsible for reducing authors to such a degraded state by unduly neglecting them.

Uncertain, too, whether his comedy will ever stand three performances, that is, up to the first benefit night for the author, Trapwit plays clever with a ruse to borrow money from Fustian.

TRAPWIT Pri'thee now tell me, *Fustian*, how dost thou like my Play? Dost think it will do?

FUSTIAN 'Tis my opinion it will.

TRAPWIT Give me a Guinea, and I will give you a Crown a-night as long as it runs.

SNEERWELL That's laying against your self, Mr. *Trapwit*.

TRAPWIT I love a Hedge, Sir. (III, p. 36)

We see Sneerwell poking fun at the transparency of Trapwit's gambit. Our attitude to Trapwit, however, may well incline towards pity rather than contempt, especially when he makes his exit as follows:

2d Player enters and whispers TRAPWIT.

2D PLAYER Sir, a Gentlewoman desires to speak to you.

TRAPWIT Is she in a Chair?

2D PLAYER No, Sir, she is in a Riding-Hood, and says she has brought you a clean Shirt. (Exit Player.

TRAPWIT I'll come to her—Mr. *Fustian*, you must excuse me a Moment; a Lady of Quality hath sent to take some Boxes. (Exit Trapwit. (III, p. 39)

Despite his affectation and dubious qualification as author, Trapwit is hardly an object of simple denunciation, and in this regard, a reminder of the hack authors in *The Author's Farce*.

Perhaps Trapwit has chosen a wrong person to ask for money, for it seems that Fustian barely fares better than Trapwit. On the news of Trapwit's arrest being delivered, Fustian rushes in to the scene in the following manner:

Gentlemen, your Servant; Ladies, yours. I should have been here sooner, but have been obliged, at their own Requests, to wait upon some half-dozen Persons of the first Quality with Tickets: Upon my Soul I have been chid for putting off my Play so long; I hope you are all quite Perfect; for the Town will positively stay for it no longer. I think I may very well put upon the Bills, *At the particular Desire of several Ladies of Quality*, the first Night. (I, p. 2)

This very first speech by Fustian brings into relief his dependence on people of quality, thus putting this Author on no more elevated plane than the other, who we are just told 'was Arrested [...] for upwards of Four Pound'. In addition, Fustian's stress, with a view to impressing the players, on 'at their own Requests', 'Persons of the first Quality', and their impatience to see his play, indicates less his distinction than his vanity, not essentially different from Trapwit's when he, as we have seen, dubiously alludes to his appointment with 'six different Companies of Quality' and then lies to Fustian and Sneerwell about the improvised 'Lady of Quality [who] sent to take some Boxes'. Our suspicion as to Fustian's real circumstances is corroborated in the opening scene of *Tumble-Down Dick*, where Sneerwell teases Fustian to stay with him to watch Machine's rehearsal, proposing a most irresistible allurements for this hungry Author.

SNEERWELL Dr. *Fustian*, do let us stay and see the Practice.

FUSTIAN And can you bear after *such a luscious Meal of Tragedy* as you have had, to put away the Taste with *such an insipid Desert*?

SNEERWELL It will divert me a different way.—I can admire the Sublime which I have seen in the Tragedy, and laugh at the Ridiculous which I expect in the Entertainment.

FUSTIAN You shall laugh by yourself then. (Going.

SNEERWELL Nay, dear *Fustian*, I beg you wou'd stay for me, for believe I can serve you; I will carry you to *Dinner* in a large Company, where you may dispose of some Tickets.

FUSTIAN Sir, I can deny you nothing.—Ay, I have *a few* Tickets in my Pockets. (Pulls out a vast Quantity of Paper.²⁸

Fustian's culinary parlance wonderfully slides into an indication of his 'empty stomach', when Sneerwell (probably knowingly) pulls down Fustian's apparent fastidiousness in (literary) taste to the matter-of-fact question of 'dinner' or no dinner. It also turns out, in a comic contrast to Fustian's first speech in *Pasquin*, that he was not very successful in selling his tickets to the said 'persons of the first quality', if he really saw them at all, 'at their own requests' or no.

Fustian's long speech opening Act IV, prior to the beginning of his play proper, sums up the hardships, poverty aside, 'a poet undergoes [...] before he comes to his third night':

Indeed a Poet undergoes a great deal before he comes to his Third Night; first with the Muses, who are humourous Ladies, and must be attended; for if they take it into their Head at any time to go abroad and leave you, you will pump your Brain in vain: Then, Sir, with the Master of a *Play-house* to get it acted, whom you generally follow a quarter of a Year before you know whether he will receive it or no; and then perhaps he tells you it won't do, and returns it you again, reserving the Subject, and perhaps the Name, which he brings out in his next *Pantomime*; but if he should receive the Play, then you must attend again to get it writ out into Parts, and Rehears'd. Well, Sir, at last, the Rehearsals begin; then, Sir, begins another Scene of Trouble with the Actors, some of whom don't like their Parts, and all are continually plaguing you with Alterations: at length, after having waded thro' all these Difficulties, his Play appears on the Stage, where one Man Hisses out of Resentment to the Author; a Second out of Dislike to the House; a Third out of Dislike to the Actor; a Fourth out of Dislike to the Play; a Fifth for the Joke sake; a Sixth to keep all the rest in Company. Enemies abuse him, Friends give him up, the Play is damn'd, and the Author goes to the Devil: *so ends the Farce*.

²⁸ The text used for *Tumble-Down Dick* is the first edition (London, 1736), and references are to the page numbers in this edition, there being no act or scene division in *Tumble-Down Dick*. The present quotation, with added italics, is from pp. 1–2.

(*Pasquin*, IV, pp. 40–41: italics added)

Indeed, *Pasquin* is, to a considerable extent, a dramatisation of how authors are constantly balked of their minimal claims, to say nothing of ambitions, to control their productions at the rehearsing stage. It is but an illusion that either Trapwit or Fustian directs the rehearsal. We have already remarked both Authors introduced as far from holding their own from the beginning, and the first thing Fustian is told the moment he comes on the stage is that he ‘must defer the Rehearsal’.

PROMPTER Mr. *Fustian*, we must defer the Rehearsal of your Tragedy, for the Gentleman who plays the first Ghost is not yet up; and when he is, he has got such a Church-yard Cough, he will not be heard to the middle of the Pit.

1ST PLAYER I wish you could cut the Ghost out, Sir; for I am terribly afraid he’ll be damn’d if you don’t.

FUSTIAN Cut him out, Sir? He is one of the most considerable Persons in the Play.

PROMPTER Then, Sir, you must give the Part to somebody else; for the Present [Person?] is so Lame he can hardly walk the Stage.

FUSTIAN Then he shall be carried; for no Man in *England* can Act a Ghost like him: Sir, he was born a Ghost: he was made for the Part, and the Part writ for him.

PROMPTER Well, Sir, then we hope you will give us leave to Rehearse the Comedy first.

FUSTIAN Ay, ay, you may Rehearse it first, if you please, and Act it first too.
(I, p. 2)

Similar challenges and interruptions pour in from all sides. The prologue of Trapwit’s rehearsal is hardly spoken, when the Prompter informs the Author that the actors ‘want Wine, and we can get none from the Quaker’s Cellar without ready Money’ (p. 5). Not long after, Trapwit is told that one of the principal actors ‘has refused to act the Part’ (p. 9), and so on. As he reaches the end of the rehearsal, Trapwit is at a loss for the epilogue, just like the four ‘Poets’ in the epilogue of *The Author’s Farce*, for

the Actresses are so damn’d difficult to please—When first I writ it they would not speak it, because there were not double Entendres enough in it; upon which I went to Mr. *Watt*’s, and borrow’d all his Plays; went Home, read over all the Epilogues, and cram’d it as full as possible; and now, forsooth, it has too many in it. Oons, I think we must set a Pair of Scales, and weigh out a sufficient Quantity of that same— (III, p. 35)

Trapwit cannot even finish his speech, interrupted by Fustian: 'Come, come, Mr. *Trapwit*, clear the Stage, if you please.' Things go no smoother for Fustian, not to mention the initial deferment of his rehearsal. As soon as the prologue is over, he is summoned out by the actress playing Common Sense and heard quarrelling with her. In the middle of the rehearsal, Fustian is told that one of his actors playing 'Law', 'going without the Play-House Passage, was taken up by a Lord Chief-Justice's Warrant' (IV, p. 52).

Challenges come from other factors, too. The original rehearsal format itself requires that rehearsal scenes be interspersed with interactions between author and critic(s), and one of Trapwit's main complaints is about Fustian's frequent interruptions.

TRAPWIT I must desire a strict Silence through this whole Scene. Colonel, stand you still on this Side of the Stage; and, Miss, do you stand on the opposite. — There, now look at each other.

(*A long Silence here.*)

FUSTIAN Pray, Mr. *Trapwit*, is no body ever to speak again?

TRAPWIT Oh! the Devil! You have interrupted the Scene; after all my Precautions the Scene's destroy'd; the best Scene of Silence that ever was pen'd by Man. (III, pp. 31–32)

In scenes like this, what is underlined is Trapwit's absurd self-conceit rather than the interruption itself, so that Trapwit is commonly regarded as a conventional Bayes figure, whereas Fustian gets the credit of being the saner of the two.²⁹ It is interesting, though, to note how both Authors, engaged in a similar cavil to the above, are told by the Prompter to shut up.

MISS MAYORESS Hey ho! I wish somebody were here now; would the Man that I love best in the World were here, that I might use him like a Dog.

FUSTIAN Is not that a very odd Wish, Mr. *Trapwit*?

TRAPWIT No, Sir; don't all the young Ladies in Plays use all their Lovers so? Should we not lose half the best Scenes in our Comedies else?

²⁹ See Bevis, p. 60, and Lewis, pp. 152, 155.

PROMPTER Pray, Gentlemen, don't disturb the Rehearsal so; Where is this
 Servant? (*Enter Servant.*) Why don't you mind your Cue? (II, p. 24)

The Author is displaced by the Prompter, and Trapwit is not the only buffoon in this scene, because Fustian looks no less awkward with his supercilious fastidiousness bluntly sabotaged.

In a rehearsal play, the author is put into an essentially vulnerable position, especially in relation to the critic(s), which explains why Fustian appears more reasoning than Trapwit, as long as he remains a critic of Trapwit's rehearsal. It is perhaps true that Trapwit is the simpler of the two and closer to the Bayes figure. Even so, the two Authors' mutual contempt, as shown in the following scene has a levelling effect on both of them, instead of exalting one over the other:

FUSTIAN You'll stay and see the Tragedy rehears'd, I hope.

TRAPWIT Faith, Sir, it is my great Misfortune that I can't; I deny myself a
 great Pleasure, but I cannot possibly stay—to hear such damn'd Stuff as I
 know it must be. (*Aside.*)

SNEERWELL Nay, dear *Trapwit*, you shall not go—Consider your Advice may
 be of some Service to Mr. *Fustian*, besides he has stay'd the Rehearsal of
 your Play—

FUSTIAN Yes, I have—and kept my self awake with much Difficulty. (*Aside.*)

TRAPWIT Nay, nay, you know I can't refuse you—though I shall certainly fall
 asleep in the first Act. (*Aside.*)

(III, pp. 35–36)

Coming as it does just before Fustian's rehearsal begins, this scene helps condition our reaction to Fustian and his play. Following upon this scene, Fustian takes over the stage from Trapwit, and as he takes Trapwit's place as Author and Sneerwell his as critic, Fustian begins to look 'as much of a fool as Trapwit' (Lewis, p. 155). If Trapwit is absurdly vain of his artistry, Fustian is no less so in responding to Sneerwell's critical commentary:

you do not understand the practical Rules of Writing as well as I do; the first and greatest of which is Protraction, or the Art of Spinning, without which the Matter of a Play would lose the chief Property of all other Matter, namely, Extension; and no Play, Sir, could possibly last longer than half an Hour. I perceive, Mr. *Sneerwell*, you are one of those who would have no Character

brought on, but what is necessary to the Business of the Play.—Nor I neither—But the Business of the Play, as I take it, is to Divert, and therefore every Character that Diverts, is necessary to the Business of the Play.
(IV, pp. 47–48)

To 'Divert' by 'Protraction', Fustian's rehearsal now moves on to the scene of three Ghosts, Tragedy, Comedy, and the third to summon the second back. Fustian's particular scrupulousness about ghosts is known, since the opening scene, where he would rather give up the stage to Trapwit's comedy than 'cut the Ghost out'. In the three Ghosts' scene, Fustian's response to Sneerwell sounds just as absurd as Trapwit's to him during the first rehearsal. Compare, for instance, the two scenes below, the first showing Trapwit dealing with Fustian's objection to his characterisation of a Mrs. Mayoress, and the second showing Fustian's retort to Sneerwell, who wonders at Fustian's impatiently calling for the second ghost after the first's disappearance at a cock crow:

FUSTIAN Again! Sure Mrs. *Mayoress* knows very little of People of Quality, considering she has lived amongst them.

TRAPWIT Lord, Sir, you are so troublesome—then she has not lived amongst People of Quality, she has lived where I please; but suppose we should suppose she had been Woman to a Lady of Quality, may we not also suppose she was turn'd away in a Fortnight, and then what could she know, Sir?—go on, go on. (II, p. 15)

SNEERWELL I thought the Cock had crow'd.

FUSTIAN Yes, but the second Ghost need not be supposed to have heard it. Pray, Mr. *Prompter*, observe, the Moment the first Ghost descends, the second is to rise: They are like the Twin-Stars in that. (IV, p. 48)

Dismissing Sneerwell's objection with the Trapwitian (un)reasoning, Fustian goes on to make sure of the exact stage effect, which is in fact one of his most vital concerns throughout his rehearsal. To go back to the beginning of his rehearsal, the very first line of the play proper is hardly spoken, when Fustian cuts in as follows:

FIREBRAND Avert these Omens, ye Auspicious Stars!

FUSTIAN What Omens? Where the Devil is the Thunder and Light'ning?

PROMPTER Why don't you let go the Thunder there, and flash your Rosin?
(*Thunder and Light'ning.*)

FUSTIAN Now, Sir, begin, if you please. I desire, Sir, you will get a larger Thunder-Bowl, and two Pennyworth more of Light'ning against the Representation. Now, Sir, if you please. (IV, pp. 41–42)

'Thunder and Light'ning' is indispensable to Fustian, particularly in ghostly scenes, so that in the aforesaid scene of three ghosts he looks even very fidgety about it:

3D GHOST Dear Ghost, the Cock has crow'd; you cannot get
Under the Ground a Mile before 'tis Day.

2D GHOST Your humble Servant then, I cannot stay. (*Ghost descends.*)

FUSTIAN Thunder and Light'ning! Thunder and Light'ning! Pray don't forget this when it is acted.

SNEERWELL Pray, Mr. *Fustian*, why must a Ghost always rise in a Storm of Thunder and Light'ning? for I have read much of that Doctrine, and don't find any Mention of such Ornaments.

FUSTIAN That may be, but they are very necessary: They are indeed properly the Paraphernalia of a Ghost. (IV, p. 48)

By no coincidence, Fustian's particular penchant for 'Thunder and Light'ning' recalls Bayes' prologue in *The Rehearsal*, acted by 'Thunder and Lightning' personified (I. 2). Fustian's Bayes-like stamp is no more incidental than Trapwit's. After all, Fustian is but 'fustian' in his cheap, melodramatic over-dramatising and dependence on flashy effects to gratify the audience's baser demands.

If Fustian makes the predominant figure in *Pasquin* and *Tumble-Down Dick* together, it is not that he is Fielding's 'mouthpiece' or anything like that (Bevis, p. 60), but that he is the only character that stays on the stage through all three rehearsals, in variable relation to other characters and especially to the other two Authors. It is true that Fustian sometimes speaks for Fielding the playwright, as in his long speech in Act IV, cited earlier, ending with 'so ends the Farce'. It is also Fustian who probably voices Fielding's view of so-called 'Entertainments', which is particularly important in the context of *Pasquin* and *Tumble-Down Dick*, considering the much increased antagonism to John Rich (hence 'Dick'), the prince of 'Entertainments', in them. For example, the Fustian in the following scene, reacting to Sneerwell's objection to the horseplay 'Representation' of a battle scene, looks different from the Fustian of 'Thunder and Light'ning':

FUSTIAN Oh! your humble Servant; but if we write to please you, and half a dozen others, who will pay the Charges of the House? Sir, if the Audience will be contented with a Battle or two, instead of all the Raree-fine Shows exhibited to them in what they call Entertainments—

SNEERWELL Pray, Mr. *Fustian*, how came they to give the Name of Entertainments to their Pantomimical Farces?

FUSTIAN Faith, Sir, out of their peculiar Modesty; intimating that after the Audience had been tired with the dull Works of *Shakespear*, *Johnson*, *Vanbrugh*, and others, they are to be entertain'd with one of these *Pantomimes*, of which the Master of the *Play-House*, two or three Painters, and half a Score Dancing-Masters are the Compilers: What these Entertainments are, I need not inform you who have seen 'em; but I have often wond'ered how it was possible for any Creature of human Understanding, after having been diverted for three Hours with the Production of a great Genius, to sit for three more, and see a Set of People running about the Stage after one another, without speaking one Syllable; and playing several Juggling Tricks, which are done at *Fawks's* after a much better manner; and for this, Sir, the Town does not only pay additional Prices, but lose several fine Parts of their best Authors, which are cut out to make room for the said Farces.

SNEERWELL It's very true, and I have heard a hundred say the same thing, who never fail'd being present at them. (V, pp. 58–59)

It appears from Fustian's first speech that facing the same dilemma as Luckless in *The Author's Farce*, he has to 'please' the audience with 'Raree-fine Shows', at least to 'pay the Charges of the House', in the teeth of criticism from 'half a dozen others' like Sneerwell, supposedly with a more refined taste. However, by inserting in his second speech that 'what these Entertainments are, I need not inform you who have seen 'em', Fustian also makes an ironical comment on Sneerwell and his likes (and the real audience at the Haymarket, too), who tend to superciliously criticise authors like Fustian (and Trapwit as well) for writing below their refined taste, while in fact countenancing 'Entertainments' or 'Pantomimical Farces'. Sneerwell perceives this and goes cynical, too, by replying that 'I have heard a hundred say the same thing, who never fail'd being present at them'. Everybody blames others for 'Farces' ousting 'fine Parts of their best Authors', when in one way or another, that is, as author or as spectator, everybody is 'present at them'. After all, that Fustian remains part of this global farce is emphatically displayed when he, in the middle of retorting to Sneerwell, shifts his key outright into that of 'Thunder and Light'ning':

FUSTIAN And while that happens they will force any Entertainment upon the Town they please, in spite of its Teeth. (*Ghost of Common-Sense rises.*) Oons, and the Devil, Madam! What's the meaning of this? You have left out a Scene; was ever such an Absurdity, as for your Ghost to appear before you are kill'd.

GHOST I ask Pardon, Sir, in the Hurry of the Battle I forgot to come and kill myself.

FUSTIAN Well, let me wipe the Flower off your Face then; and now if you please Rehearse the Scene; take care you don't make this Mistake any more tho'; for it would inevitably damn the Play, if you should. Go to the Corner of the Scene, and come in as if you had lost the Battle.

(V, pp. 59–60)

Granting that Fustian voices Fielding's valid complaint about 'Entertainments', which is in itself unstable, mixed with the apology for authors at the expense of those overt and covert patrons of such entertainments, he is made to look as silly as ever on the spot, fidgeting again about the absurdity of a not-yet-killed ghost and wiping the flour off the ghost-actress's face. Fustian's 'Tragedy' turns out as absurd a farce as any 'Entertainment'.

In my view, it can be plausibly argued that the damn'd 'Poet' in the very next scene to the above has as much of Fielding as Fustian, and in this regard, numbers among those damned poets or authors who haunt Fielding's works. One of them we have seen in the Styx scene of *The Author's Farce*, and a lot more will come up as we proceed. The 'Poet' in Fustian's play comes on the scene of the deserted Queen Common-Sense thus:

QUEEN Deserted and forlorn, where shall I fly?
The Battle's lost, and so are all my Friends.
Enter a Poet.
POET Madam, not so, still you have one Friend left.
QUEEN Why, what art thou?
POET Madam, I am a Poet.
QUEEN Whoe'er thou art, if thou'rt a Friend to Misery,
Know *Common-Sense* disclaims thee.
POET I have been damn'd
Because I was your Foe, and yet I still
Court'd your Friendship with my utmost Art.
QUEEN Fool, thou wert damn'd because thou didst pretend
Thy self my Friend; for hadst thou boldly dar'd,
Like *Hurlothrombo*, to deny me quite;
Or like an Opera or Pantomime,

Profest the cause of Ignorance in publick,
 Thou might'st have met with thy desir'd Success;
 But Men can't bear even a Pretence to Me. (V, p. 60)

Like this 'Poet', Fielding was 'damned' and flouted as nonsensical *farceur*, 'Foe' to 'Common-Sense', especially by *The Grub-Street Journal* and its allies, while he thought himself fighting the cause of 'Common Sense' with works like *The Author's Farce* or *Pasquin* itself. Queen Common Sense tells the 'Poet' that it was because he did not boldly write a Hurllothrumbo, so that in the end the Poet leaves the stage with these lines:

Ha! Say'st thou? By my soul a better Play
 Ne'er came upon a Stage; but since you dare
 Contemn me thus, I'll dedicate my Play
 To *Ignorance*, and call her *Common-Sense*:
 Yes, I will dress her in your Pomp, and swear
 That *Ignorance* knows more than all the World. (pp. 60–61)

This brief episode seems to me to sum up Fielding's career to date, so that these final lines by the Poet can be construed as a self-derogatory pretext for Fielding's settling down as impresario and author of farces at the Haymarket.

To say that the Poet in the above scene is self-referential on Fielding's part is by no means to argue that he is the author's satirical 'mouthpiece' or 'surrogate'. That he is not is clear from the context, which rather sketches him as dubious and far from 'normative'. The self-referential quality recognisable in this zany Poet is one brief example revealing Fielding's tendency to feature himself as one of the Authors, not above them, and likewise 'a laughing Stock'. It is also true of the way Fielding delineates Fustian and puts himself into this no less zany 'Author', for all his tentative rally against 'Entertainments'. If apparently less like Fielding, even Trapwit is not ultimately detached from him. Trapwit's *Election* bears a close resemblance, in terms of both matter and manner, to Fielding's *Don Quixote in England*, which was staged in 1734 at the Haymarket. Likewise, Fustian's *Life and Death of Common Sense* is a 1736 version of Luckless's puppet show *The Pleasures of the Town* or Fielding's

Author's Farce. None of these plays are absolutely distinct from what people like Sneerwell or Fielding himself would call farces or entertainments, nor their Authors from Johnson of Cheshire or even John Rich, caricatured as Machine in *Tumble-Down Dick*.

As noted earlier, Fustian stays on the stage in *Tumble-Down Dick*, too, resuming his critical role as Machine's rehearsal unfolds. *Tumble-Down Dick* opens with the scene, as we have seen, showing Fustian held back on the stage in view of a 'Dinner in a large Company' where he expects to 'dispose of some Tickets'. Following upon Fustian's taking out 'a vast Quantity' of unsold tickets, Machine opens his first speech thus:

MACHINE Gentlemen, I must beg you to clear the Stage intirely; for in things of this serious Nature, if we do not comply with the exactest Decency, the Audience will be very justly offended.

FUSTIAN Things of a serious Nature! Oh the Devil!

MACHINE Harkye, Prompter, who is that Figure there?

PROMPTER That, Sir, is Mr. *Fustian*, Author of the New Tragedy.

MACHINE Oh! I smoke him, I smoke him. But, Mr. Prompter, I must insist that you cut out a great deal of *Othello*, if my Pantomime is perform'd with it, or the Audience will be pall'd before the Entertainment begins.

PROMPTER We'll cut out the Fifth Act, Sir, if you please.

MACHINE Sir, that's not enough, I'll have the First cut out too.

FUSTIAN Death and the Devil! Can I bear this? Shall *Shakespear* be mangled to introduce this Trumpery?

PROMPTER Sir, this gentleman brings more Money to the House than all the Poets put together.

MACHINE Pugh, pugh, *Shakespear*!—Come, let down the Curtain, and play away the Overture.—Prompter, to your Post. (p. 2)

In sharp contrast to the introduction of either Trapwit or Fustian, Machine's entrance strikes the audience as starkly commanding. He orders the stage to be 'intirely' cleared and contemptuously inquires 'who is that Figure there', implying Fustian is but an obscure nobody. A nobody indeed for Machine, who has *Othello* mutilated at will: 'Pugh, pugh, *Shakespear*!'. There is no use complaining against him, for he 'brings more Money to the House than all the Poets put together', which makes the Prompter so obliging and submissive to him. What Fustian has earlier said in *Pasquin* proves too true in this scene: 'for this [...] the Town does not only pay additional

Prices, but lose several fine Parts of their best Authors, which are cut out to make room for the said Farces’.

Whereas Fustian’s commentary on Trapwit’s rehearsal helps underline Trapwit’s inadequacy, his critical role in *Tumble-Down Dick* appears much dwarfed, and it is generally Fustian, not Machine, who looks awkward in scenes like the following:

- FUSTIAN Sir, Sir, here’s a small Error, I observe; how comes the Justice to attempt buying this Jar, as I suppose you intend, when it’s directed to the *Theatre-Royal* in *Drury-Lane*?
- MACHINE Sir, Sir, here’s no Error, I observe; for how shou’d the Justice know that, when he can’t read?
- SNEERWELL Ay, there I think, Mr. *Fustian*, you must own yourself in the wrong.
- FUSTIAN People that can’t read ought not to be brought upon the Stage, that’s all. (p. 9)
- MACHINE There, Sir, is a Scene in Heroicks between a Cobler and his Wife; now you shall have a Scene in mere Prose between several Gods.
- FUSTIAN I should have thought it more natural for the Gods to have talk’d in Heroicks, and the Cobler and his Wife in Prose.
- MACHINE You think it would have been more natural, so do I, and for that very Reason have avoided it; for the chief Beauty of an Entertainment, Sir, is to be unnatural. Come, where are the Gods? (p. 15)

Although Fustian seems to raise valid questions in both moral and aesthetic terms, they are reduced to timid mumblings rather than cutting criticisms, refuted by Machine’s formidably dismissive responses. Machine’s confidence in dealing with Fustian is remarkable, particularly in the first scene, where he rounds on Fustian, in mocking mimicry of his words. Being a professional, Machine is deliberately ‘unnatural’, in firm grasp of the ‘mysteries’ of his trade. Never equivocating to any objection, he easily silences a petty author like Fustian.

As mentioned earlier, Machine is modelled on John Rich, the chief entertainment author-performer-entrepreneur of his time and owner of two theatres at Lincoln’s Inn Fields and Covent Garden. Though not present in person in *Pasquin*, Machine/Rich is the one meant by the ‘Master of a Play-house’ who, Fustian says, rejects one’s play and then ‘brings [it] out in his next Pantomime’ (pp. 40–41), and his ascendancy provides the backdrop against which both Trapwit the comedian and Fustian the

tragedian may well be seen. As Fustian's Ghosts of Tragedy and Comedy well denote, both are dead and displaced by 'Pantomimical Farces'. Machine/Rich is simply the one who 'brings more Money to the House than all the Poets put together', the truth of which is testified by both Trapwit and Fustian struggling in vain to make a living out of the theatre and court 'People of Quality'. Thus Fustian's transference into *Tumble-Down Dick* plays a crucial part in establishing this displacement of authors by Machine/Rich, whose brazen-faced absurdity and unequivocal professionalism constantly drive Fustian to his wit's end.

Fielding's personal animosity against Rich finds further outlet in the ironic dedication of *Tumble-Down Dick* to 'Mr. John Lun' (Lun being the stage name for Rich),³⁰ in which he makes a jab at this theatrical 'Great Man' thus:

as *Pasquin* has proved of greater Advantage to me, than it could have been at any other Play-House, under their present Regulations, I am oblig'd to you for the Indifference you shew'd at my Proposal to you of bringing a Play on your Stage this Winter, which immediately determin'd me against any farther pursuing that Project; for as I never yet yielded to any mean or subservient Solicitations of the Great Men in real Life, I could by no means prevail on myself to play an Under-part in that Dramatick Entertainment of Greatness, which you are pleased to divert yourself with in Private, and which, was you to exhibit it in Publick, might prove as profitable to you, and as diverting a *Pantomime* to the Town, as any you have hitherto favour'd us with.

Sufficiently nauseated at playing an 'Under-part' as *mere* author, Fielding turned a self-appointed great man(ager), the 'Great Mogul'. As insinuated in the above, *Pasquin* proved a smash hit, creating, in Cleary's words, 'a stir comparable to the *Beggar's Opera* sensation of 1728' (p. 6),³¹ and filling the author-manager's pockets with a lot more money than the revenues he could have expected from benefit nights alone. Whether to retaliate for his treatment in *Pasquin* or to capitalise on its success or both, Rich responded to Fielding with *Marforio*, 'a hasty counterblast at *Pasquin*' (Hume, p. 214), which died on its first night (10 April 1736). Fielding as 'Pasquin' refers to this, too, in the dedication:

³⁰ See Lewis, p. 161.

³¹ See also Hume, p. 215.

I am, moreover, much oblig'd to you for that Satire on *Pasquin*, which you was so kind to bring on your Stage; and here I declare (whatever People may think to the contrary) you did it of your own mere Goodness, without any Reward or Solicitation from me. I own it was a sensible Pleasure to me to observe the Town, which had before been so favourable to *Pasquin* at his own House, confirming that Applause, by thoroughly condemning the Satire on him at Yours.

It was this dramatic reversal of fortune, plus the financial breakthrough *Pasquin* brought him, that boosted Fielding's confidence to the extent that he came up with the far more personalised satire on Rich in *Tumble-Down Dick* (first staged on 29 April 1736), adding the dedication when publishing it. Meanwhile, Fielding moved promptly to make the most of the success of *Pasquin*, raising ticket prices to the same rate as those at the patent theatres. The financial *coup* of the 1736 season even made it possible for Fielding to plan to build 'a theatre to house a company of his own' (Hume, p. 244).³² As an ironic consequence of this whole series of events, Fielding became a second Rich, so to speak, enriching himself, with true entrepreneurial aptness, with the plays which were essentially farces, and then planning a new theatre of his own, just as Rich had built a new theatre at Covent Garden in 1732. The Fielding in the dedication of *The Historical Register* is more clearly the entrepreneur Fielding. After facetiously defending himself as 'a ministerial writer' against the attack of the *Daily Gazetteer* to the contrary, the dedicator duly reminds his dedicatee, the 'public' in the present case, of 'some amends'.

You will excuse a digression so necessary to take off surmises, which may prove so prejudicial to my fortune; which, however, if I should not be able to accomplish, I hope you will make me some amends for what I suffer by endeavoring your entertainment. The very great indulgence you have shown my performances at the little theater, these two last years, have encouraged me to the proposal of a subscription for carrying on that theater, for beautifying and enlarging it and procuring a better company of actors. If you think proper to subscribe to these proposals, I assure you no labor shall be spared on my

³² For detailed accounts of Fielding's finances at the Haymarket and plan for a new theatre, see Hume, pp. 215–20 and 224–28 respectively.

side, to entertain you in a cheaper and better manner than seems to be the intention of any other. (Dedication, 194)³³

By no coincidence, it is the Machine-like brazen-faced avowal of absurdity that characterises Medley and Spatter, the Authors of *The Historical Register* and *Eurydice Hissed* respectively. Medley joins the critic Sourwit and Lord Dapper on the stage, and his manner of dealing with the first question from the critic is rather defiant than awkwardly apologetic.

SOURWIT Mr. Medley, you know I am a plain speaker, so you will excuse any liberties I take.

MEDLEY Dear sir, you can't oblige me more.

SOURWIT Then I must tell you, sir, I am a little stagger'd at the name of your piece. Doubtless, sir, you know the rules of writing, and I can't guess how you can bring the actions of a whole year into the circumference of four-and-twenty hours.

MEDLEY Sir, I have several answers to make to your objection. In the first place, my piece is *not of a nature confined to any rules*, as being *avowedly irregular*, but if it was otherwise, I think I could quote you precedents of plays that neglect them. Besides, sir, if I comprise the whole actions of a year in half an hour, will you blame me or those who have done so little in that time? My register is not to be filled like those vulgar news-writers with trash for want of news, and therefore if I say little or nothing, you may thank those who have done little or nothing. (I. 53: italics added)

The latter part of Medley's answer pertains to the anti-Walpole satire *The Historical Register* sets out to carry out, which will be discussed in the next section together with that in the other rehearsal plays. What is important in the present context is Medley's affirmation that his 'piece is not of a nature confined to any rules, as being avowedly irregular', which significantly assimilates Medley to Machine. This uncanny aspect of Medley is wholly overlooked by both Lewis and Bevis in their analyses of Medley.

Medley, the author of the inner play, is not a Bayes-figure, but the antithesis of a Bayes-figure, being Fielding's spokesman and possibly even a self-portrait. (Lewis, p. 187)

³³ Hume refers to this dedication as evidencing that 'Fielding had decided to remodel the Little Haymarket instead of building a new theatre' (p. 226).

Fielding never went further in identifying with and speaking through the Author of a rehearsal play than in the case of Medley, the shrewd, serious satirist who directs and interprets the action of *The Historical Register*.
(Bevis, p. 62)

It is worth noting that while both critics ground their views on Medley's speech as to his 'design [...] to ridicule the vicious and foolish customs of the age', the 'classic rationale for satire' (Bevis, p. 62), they completely ignore the context in which the speech is set:

SOURWIT Well, sir, and pray what is your design, your plot?
 MEDLEY Why, sir, I have several plots, some pretty deep and some but shallow.
 SOURWIT I hope, sir, they all conduce to the main design.
 MEDLEY Yes, sir, they do.
 SOURWIT Pray, sir, what is that?
 MEDLEY To divert the town and bring full houses.
 SOURWIT Pshaw! You misunderstand me. I mean what is your moral, your, your, your—
 MEDLEY Oh, sir, I comprehend you. Why, sir, my design is to ridicule the vicious and foolish customs of the age, and that in a fair manner, without fear, favour, or ill-nature, and without scurrility, ill manners, or commonplace. (I. 77)

It is true that Medley's speech at the end would be the last thing to be put into Machine's mouth. Still, both the perfunctory way Medley delivers it and the priority (however ironic) given to the 'main design [...] to divert the town and bring full houses' render this Author problematic and require a more complex reading than the above examples suggest.

It is also significant that at times Medley exhibits vestiges of the Trapwitian complacency and self-congratulation. At the beginning of his rehearsal, Medley says, 'I intend to have every thing new', which fits well with his main design 'to divert the town'. He also introduces to Sourwit the auction scene by Mr. Hen as follows:

I can assure you, Mr. Sourwit, this scene, which I look on as the best in the whole performance, will require a very deep attention. Sir, if you should take one pinch of snuff during the whole scene, you will lose a joke by it, and yet

they lie pretty deep too, and may escape observation from a moderate understanding unless very closely attended to. (II. 69)

In effect, the latter part of this speech again reminds the audience to be alert to anti-Walpole innuendoes couched in the allegorical auction, but the Trapwitian vanity infused into this allegedly 'shrewd, serious satirist' seems odd enough. In another scene, one of Medley's more valid comments condemning 'luxury, effeminacy and debauchery' is dismissed by the actresses' impatiently saying to the verbose Author, 'Don't interrupt us, dear sir' (II. 28).

That Spatter as well as Medley has much of the Machine-like avowed absurdity is adumbrated from the outset, when he introduces his tragedy *Eurydice Hissed* in the following manner:

SPATTER My lord, I am extremely obliged to you for the honor you show me in staying to the rehearsal of my tragedy. I hope it will please your lordship as well as Mr. Medley's comedy has, for I assure you 'tis ten times as ridiculous.

SOURWIT Is it the merit of a tragedy, Mr. Spatter, to be ridiculous?

SPATTER Yes, sir, of such tragedies as mine; and I think you, Mr. Sourwit, will grant me this, that a tragedy had better be ridiculous than dull, and that there is more merit in making the audience laugh than in setting them asleep.³⁴

Spatter's inverted doctrine of a ridiculous tragedy is as perplexing as Machine's opening claim that his 'entertainment' is of such a 'serious nature' that he should 'comply with the exactest decency'. Indeed, the nominal distinction between Medley's 'comedy' and Spatter's 'tragedy' notwithstanding, what is really underlined here is the 'generic miscegenation', which, as we have discussed in the preceding section, makes it not only impossible but meaningless to distinguish comedy from tragedy, tragedy from farce. What difference does it make to call Spatter's a tragedy and Medley's a comedy, when they are both all but transparent farces? Likewise,

³⁴ *Eurydice Hissed*, in 'The Historical Register for the Year 1736' and 'Eurydice Hissed', ed. by William W. Appleton (London: Edward Arnolds, 1968). Like *Tumble-Down Dick*, *Eurydice Hissed* comprises one continuous scene, and therefore references are to the first line numbers in this edition.

what difference is there between Fustian's tragedy and Trapwit's comedy? Indeed, are they not as much farces as Machine's 'Pantomimical Farces'? Hence Fustian's 'so ends the Farce' (p. 41) and Medley's 'so ends my play, my farce, or what you please to call it' (III. 275). As there is no real distinction between one genre and another, one Author is just as much 'a laughing Stock' as another.

Spatter explains to Sourwit that he has 'very cunningly' chosen the subject of the 'damnation of *Eurydice*': 'as the town have damned my play for their own sakes they will not damn the damnation of it' (14). It is one 'Pillage', instead of Spatter himself, who is presented as the Author of *Eurydice*, and from Spatter's introduction through Pillage's soliloquy, the phrase 'the author of a farce' is sinisterly repeated over and over again.

SPATTER You see here *the author of a mighty farce* at the very top and pinnacle of poetical or rather *farical greatness*, followed, flattered and adored by a crowd of dependents. On a sudden, Fortune changing the scene, and his *farce* being damned, you see him become the scorn of his admirers and deserted and abandoned by all those who courted his favour and appeared the foremost to uphold and protect him. —Draw the scene and discover Mr. Pillage.

Scene draws. (Mr. Pillage appears on the stage.)

SOURWIT Who is he?

SPATTER *The author of the farce.*

SOURWIT A very odd name for an author.

SPATTER Perhaps you will not remain long in that opinion. But—silence!

PILLAGE Who'd wish to be *the author of a farce*,
Surrounded daily by a crowd of actors,
Gaping for parts and never to be satisfied;
Yet, say the wise, in loftier seats of life,
Solicitation is the chief reward,
And Wolsey's self, that mighty minister,
In the full height and zenith of his power,
Amid a crowd of sycophants and slaves,
Was but perhaps *the author of a farce*,
Perhaps a damned one too. 'Tis all a cheat,
Some men play little farces and some great.

Exit.

(26: italics added)

As we will see in detail in next section, Pillage stands for Walpole and the 'damnation of *Eurydice*' represents the fiasco of Walpole's Excise Bill in 1733, in the anti-Walpole programme of *Eurydice Hissed*. At the same time, the internal logic of

Eurydice Hissed features Pillage as the Author of *Eurydice* and *Pasquin* as well (228). As regards the merging of Fielding and Walpole into Pillage, Bevis refutes the possibility as follows:

It is very unlikely [...]—or at least very seldom—that Pillage's words or actions can stand for Fielding's. Pillage, whose name connotes plagiarism, manipulates his 'friends' to achieve his ends, profits from them much as the diabolic Quidam does in *The Historical Register*, and looks forward to the time 'When none shall dare to hiss within the house' (I. 1). The critic Honestus sometimes speaks for Fielding, but the normative Author who affords perspective on both Pillage and Walpole is Spatter. (p. 63)

As usual, Bevis's view is too schematic and lacks the critical subtlety and flexibility required to understand the problematic relation of the Authors to Fielding. I rather agree with Rivero, who finds in Pillage 'Fielding's most honest self-portrait' (p. 135). Pillage is the closest of all Authors, except Luckless, to Fielding, and what Bevis himself says of Luckless is true of Pillage: 'the parallels with Fielding's own career [...] are too numerous to ignore' (p. 58). First of all, he is the internal Author of both *Pasquin* and *Eurydice*. Secondly, Pillage comes closer to the Fielding at the Haymarket in 1736-37 than any other Author, in that he is 'not only a poet, but a master of a playhouse' (60). Thirdly, it is not unlikely that Fielding's managerial capacity involved some, if not all, of Pillage's dealings (apparently disreputable) behind the scenes, although they are exaggerated to stand for Walpole's political machinations. For instance, Honestus reproaches Pillage for 'raising [...] prices on the town' (183), to which Pillage rejoins that 'the town for their own sakes those prices pay, | Which the additional expense demands'. We know that Fielding raised ticket prices as soon as *Pasquin* began to show signs of a success. In this regard, it can also be argued that Medley's main design to 'bring full houses' does not entirely belie Fielding's. Besides, the dialogue between the Muse and Pillage (220) hardly makes any sense with Walpole in Pillage's shoes. Not only does this scene establish Pillage as the Author of *Pasquin*, but it also implies that Pillage used to be a conscientious and Muse-inspired author, which he is not now as the Author of *Eurydice*, 'begotten

on no muse, | The trifling offspring of an idle hour' (230). At the end of the scene, Pillage courts the Muse to inspire him again, as in the days when he wrote *Pasquin*, and goes out with her to 'write a scene' (279). The promise notwithstanding, the final scene of *Eurydice Hissed* shows Pillage receiving the news of the damnation of *Eurydice* and getting drunk. It ends with Honestus' admonition that 'no man dare to make a simple farce' (370), and we are never to know what Pillage/Fielding's next farce would have been like, because the Licensing Act brought to an end his theatrical career.

Of *Eurydice Hissed*, Lewis says that it is 'a play [*Eurydice Hissed*] about a play [*The Damnation of Eurydice*] about a play [*Eurydice*]' (p. 193), going one better than *The Rehearsal* and Fielding's other reflexive plays, too. I would rather say that in *Eurydice Hissed*, Fielding is writing about himself [Spatter] writing about himself [Pillage]. It is indeed an extreme case and would remain such by the standards of any post-modernist fiction. *The Historical Register* is not so directly and intricately self-reflexive as *Eurydice Hissed*, but as Hume rightly points out, '*The Historical Register* is both Fielding's play and Medley's interior play', unlike *Pasquin*, which 'carefully preserves the pretence of a play within a play' (p. 234), with two internal Authors whose plays are differently titled from the frame play. When it comes to *Tumble-Down Dick*, we have two internal Authors, Machine and Fustian, and the third 'Pasquin' who signs the dedication. Then who is the 'I' of the unsigned dedication of *The Historical Register*, vindicating 'my innocence' in consideration of 'my fortune' and advertising for subscriptions to refurbish the Little Theatre at the Haymarket? Medley? Pasquin, again? Fielding? Perhaps the Great Mogul himself? I am not putting this question to be answered. It is rather to underline the unanswerability of such a question, and so far as Fielding's Authors are concerned, the impossibility of categorising some of them as Fielding's 'surrogates' and others as his 'butts', 'enemies', or whatever. As I have shown, there is an uncanny similarity between Machine, a caricature of Rich, and Medley, allegedly the sanest of all Fielding's Authors, and Spatter, too, Fielding's second self writing about the damnation of

Eurydice. More unlikely but true is the concomitance of Fielding and Walpole in Pillage. Each of them is called the 'author of a farce', explicitly or implicitly, descending from Luckless in *The Author's Farce*. As exhibited in Pillage's case, the 'author of a farce' and the 'master of a playhouse' are interchangeable, for either of them is the 'servant of the public', as Honestus puts it. Thus circumscribed, the Author is critically alienated from any form of authority, even in the scene of directing the rehearsal, as we have earlier discussed, not to mention in the real performance, the real confrontation with the damning audience. In a sense, Fielding's rehearsal can be regarded as an imagined deferment of confrontation with the audience, whom he served but hated to do so. It seems that he tried to screen himself from the audience and from his subjection to them by staging different Authors and endlessly signing different names. On the other hand, such screening was destabilised by Fielding's consciousness of his complicity with other authors in the farce of authorship. In the double capacity of the Authors, at once first-person and third-person, he found a means by which he could be at once the mocker and the mocked. It is no coincidence that Fielding and Walpole, the author of a little farce and master of the little playhouse at the Haymarket and the author of a great farce and master of the House of Commons, are merged in Pillage.

3. 'Some men play little farces and some great': Walpole the *Farceur*

As has been argued in Section 1, Fielding's conception of literary authority was formed in complex interaction with his ambivalent views of literary & political great men respectively, in an age when these two categories of great men were in particularly antagonistic relations with each other. In the earliest stage of his career, he made tentative claims to the Scriblerian association by borrowing their name and theme, while concurrently if obliquely giving voice to his 'anti-Scriblerian jealousy'. On the other hand, his no more successful flirtation with people of quality and power, including Walpole, deepened his 'bitterness towards the class he felt had abandoned

him'³⁵ particularly with regard to his submissive relation as author to them. As he emerged from apprenticeship and obscurity, Fielding strove less for the apparent Scriblerian affiliation. In fact, Fielding's admission into the Scriblerian circle became even more out of the question, for he was reputed as one of the dunces rather than their enemies, especially by the authors of *The Grub-Street Journal*.³⁶ In the seasons 1735–37, yet another factor influenced Fielding's position. As '*Pasquin* became the greatest "hit" of the decade' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 193) with its sufficiently recognisable anti-government innuendoes, its author found himself sensationally prosperous and also vested with the 'aura of anti-establishment heroism', of which he in 1728 had surreptitiously attempted to rob Gay, with his unpublished 'Original Song Written on the Appearance of the Beggar's Opera' (Cleary, p. 26). A curious tribute to Fielding, titled 'On seeing Mr. Pope at the *Dramatic Satire* call'd *Pasquin*', appeared in the hitherto hostile *Grub-Street Journal* (8 April 1736), though its editor belatedly denied Pope's attendance at the performance (Battestin, *Life*, pp. 196–97). There is no telling whether or not Pope really graced Fielding's *Pasquin* 'with a smile', but the existence of such an article in the pages of *The Grub-Street Journal* can at least be regarded as an indication of someone acknowledging *Pasquin*'s political attraction for Pope and his circle.³⁷

It is no mere chance that Pope should have been supposed to respond with positive appreciation to *Pasquin* at this juncture, for the opening of the 1735–36 season coincided with a significant uprise of reinvigorated anti-Walpole writings .

This was the period in which Lyttelton gathered around Frederick a circle of 'Patriot Poets'; in which Fielding's plays became openly satirical of Walpole;

³⁵ William B. Coley, 'The Background of Fielding's Laughter', *English Literary History*, 26 (1959), 229–52 (p. 230).

³⁶ See Hume, pp. 139–41, and Battestin, *Life*, pp. 131–33, for the details and backgrounds of Fielding's altercations with *The Grub-Street Journal* in 1732, following the production and publication (with the dedication to Walpole) of *The Modern Husband*.

³⁷ Battestin also refers to lines 41–44 in Book IV of the 1743 *Dunciad* as declaring Pope's 'approbation of *Pasquin* and *The Historical Register*' (*Life*, p. 317). The 'Satyr' whose cause Pope says Chesterfield defended in 1737 is Fielding's almost beyond doubt, but I suspect that Pope reveals his reserve towards Fielding by withholding his name from the lines and addressing them to Chesterfield instead.

in which the Licensing Act was passed to regulate the stage, and in which Pope became increasingly bolder in his political satire.³⁸

Whereas Goldgar denies that this development was 'quite the result of an organized, direct program', both Cleary and Battestin corroborate the consolidation of the so-called 'Broad Bottom' opposition in 1735, under the ideological guidance of Bolingbroke.³⁹ In this new opposition, George Lyttelton, Fielding's patron and lifelong friend from Eton, played a crucial role as the 'chief link between the Broad-Bottoms and Bolingbroke' and recruiter of literary allies, including Pope and Fielding. According to Cleary, Fielding would remain 'Lyttelton's greatest recruit and the most formidable and faithful of Broad-Bottom writers' (p. 4). Besides, Lyttelton was himself a major contributor to their literary programme, which deplored, among other things, electoral corruption and declaimed against the current government by party and faction. His *Letters from a Persian in England, to his Friend at Ispahan* (March 1735) was taken as one of the earliest promulgations of the 'Patriot' doctrine, influenced by Bolingbroke's *Dissertation upon Parties*, which originally appeared in *The Craftsman* in 1733–34 and was published in 1735 with an ironic dedication to Walpole (Goldgar, pp. 138–41, Battestin, *Life*, p. 198, and Cleary, pp. 3–4). No less central to this new opposition to Walpole was that it 'always placed very heavy emphasis on the literary side of the assault on Walpole, just as Bolingbroke and his Scriblerian friends had done since the mid-1720s' (Cleary, p. 4), thus proposing its attractive cause to 'any self-respecting writer' in the post-Scriblerian era (Goldgar, pp. 135–36).

To be sure, Trapwit's *Election* and Fustian's *Life and Death of Common Sense* espouse the two most important tenets of the new Patriot or Broad Bottom opposition. *The Election* dramatises the corruption of both 'court' and 'country' parties and the

³⁸ Bertrand A. Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits: The Relation of Politics to Literature, 1722–1742* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1976), p. 135.

³⁹ Cleary's *Henry Fielding: Political Writer* gives the most detailed account of what he prefers to call Fielding's 'Broad Bottom' loyalty and its influence on his writings. For accounts of the consolidation of this new opposition and Fielding's enlistment therein, see Cleary, esp. pp. 1–5, 75–81, and Battestin, *Life*, pp. 197–99. Fielding's alliance with the Broad-Bottoms is dated from late 1735.

venality of electors, the same issues as depicted in *Don Quixote in England* (staged in 1734) in view of the impending general election of 1734 (Cleary, p. 68). Battestin argues that 'anyone who came to *Pasquin* from a reading of the *Persian Letters* [...] would be aware that the satire of bribery and corruption in the comedy merely renders Lyttelton's "patriot" doctrine in dramatic form' (p. 198). As for *The Life and Death of Common Sense*, its plot portrays the usurpation of the empire of Queen Common Sense by Queen Ignorance, aided by Firebrand, Common Sense's chief priest in the temple of the Sun. We can easily see in Fustian's Ignorance a translation of Luckless's Nonsense, and like Luckless's puppet show, Fustian's rehearsed play is 'a partial dramatization of *The Dunciad*' (Lewis, p. 155). It is a fairly transparent rendering of the perennial anti-Walpole slur, 'made familiar both by *The Dunciad* and by countless essays in opposition journals decrying the decline of taste and learning under Walpole' (Goldgar, p. 152). Goldgar rightly adds that 'the decline of culture and the triumph of dullness could hardly be talked about in 1736 without political overtones'. Doubtless, Firebrand the chief priest of the Sun (hence Apollo, god of poetry, too) was taken to represent Walpole the Prime Minister and mock-patron of writers like the 'Gazetteers', who became synonymous with dunces after the co-ordination of all government-subsidised journals into the *Daily Gazetteer* in 1735. As we shall remark later on, the Gazetteers came to secure a place in Fielding's satire from *Pasquin* onwards. When Lyttelton and Lord Chesterfield launched a new opposition journal in February 1737, with *The Craftsman* in its 'lengthy post-Bolingbrokean decline' (Cleary, p. 4) after Bolingbroke's departure to France in 1735,⁴⁰ they chose to title it *Common Sense* in commemoration of Queen Common Sense in Fustian's tragedy, thus relegating their adversary, the ministry, to the domain of Ignorance (Battestin, *Life*, pp. 198–99).

Whereas there are disputes as to *Pasquin*'s partisan alignment, the 'acid factionalism' of *The Historical Register* and *Eurydice Hissed* is commonly agreed

⁴⁰ See also Laurence Hanson, *Government and the Press, 1695–1763* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 112.

upon (Hume, pp. 236–37, Cleary, p. 103, and Goldgar, p. 154). Goldgar gives an account of the changing political climate in favour of the opposition as background to Fielding's open partisanship in the 1737 season:

between the production of *Pasquin* and that of *The Historical Register* a full year passed, a year in which the Prince of Wales moved into an open break with the court and became irretrievably entrenched as the nominal head of the opposition. The entire political atmosphere was altered in 1737, with Walpole's position weaker than it had been for four years. (p. 154)

The presence of the Prince of Wales at the head of the opposition was particularly significant in that he 'would remove from them any further taint of Jacobite disloyalty' (Goldgar, p. 135). Emboldened by this situation, *The Historical Register* makes a 'medley' of anti-Walpole slurs, so that every episode therein has at least one Walpole figure: (1) the 'first and greatest politician' in the Corsican politicians' scene; (2) the auctioneer 'Hen' (based on a real auctioneer Christopher Cock) in the auction scene; (3) Pistol (based on Theophilus Cibber) in the following interlude, who entitles himself 'Prime Minister theatrical' at his 'pinnacle of power' (II. 314); (4) the 'modern Apollo', introduced as the sole 'inventor' of the age's peculiar corruption, and 'Ground Ivy' (based on Colley Cibber), too, in the episode of the casting of *King John*; and (5) 'Quidam the fiddler' (III. 267) in the final episode of the patriots in Corsica. If such repetitive tenacity characterises the anti-Walpole satire in *The Historical Register*, *Eurydice Hissed*, 'the most thoroughly political, most steadily anti-Walpole of Fielding's five plays of 1736–37' (Cleary, p. 103), impresses us with its focused intensity. As remarked earlier, it has Pillage standing unmistakably for Walpole and his damned farce for Walpole's Excise Bill, assuring its first audience, including the Earl of Egmont, of its obvious 'allegory on the loss of the Excise Bill' and 'Satire on Sir Robert Walpole' (cited in Battestin, *Life*, p. 221, and Cleary, p. 103).

The evident partisanship of *The Historical Register* and *Eurydice Hissed* notwithstanding, Goldgar is not completely convinced of Fielding's definite

commitment to the political opposition any more than of the existence of 'an organized opposition', whose cause Fielding is believed to have espoused. Instead Goldgar stresses the 'influence of literary fashion' (p. 135), on top of the influence of Fielding's personal relations with Lyttelton and other figures in the opposition, as an important factor that brought about Fielding's 'unmistakable satire of Walpole' in *Pasquin* and especially in *The Historical Register*. Goldgar says this is not 'in the least surprising', because

these plays were produced and published at a time when [...] the literary hue and cry after Walpole had reached a level that no self-respecting wit could afford to ignore if he hoped to amuse the town. (p. 151)

As it precedes Cleary's proposition of Fielding's alliance with the new concerted opposition, Goldgar's scruple about subscribing to the wholly political interpretation of Fielding's entrance into politics in the 1736 season may seem out of date. In my view, though, Goldgar still makes an important point as to the relationship between politics and ticket sales in the contemporary theatre, to which a playwright/manager like Fielding cannot have turned a blind eye. The phenomenal success of *Pasquin* proved that he had a correct insight into the disposition of the town. Furthermore, 'Fielding's successes in 1736,' says Cleary, 'made the other London theatres more receptive to political satire' (p. 95). Just as *The Beggar's Opera* had set an example in 1728, so in 1736 it was *Pasquin* that reconfirmed the said relationship between politics, especially opposition politics, and ticket sales. Indeed Fielding's 'cultural politics', given a definite expression in *The Author's Farce* (Hammond, p. 82), led him to find 'a cause and natural patrons' to serve in the new Broad Bottom opposition (Cleary, p. 77), which explains the ideological agreement between the output of 1730 and that of 1736–37. However, it is all but certain that as the new manager at the Haymarket, Fielding had a shrewd eye for the town's proven inclination towards political satire, taking advantage of the rising political temperature, which was felicitously agreeable to his political alignment if not to his aesthetic ideal.

In this context, it is worth remarking that it remains unclear whether there was any financial support for Fielding from Lyttelton or anyone else in the opposition, whose cause his theatre served. Neither Cleary nor Battestin seems to have any definite evidence in this regard. At the same time, Hume's reconstruction of Fielding's circumstances in assembling the 'Great Mogul's Company' and running the Haymarket (pp. 203–09, 215–20) points to the lack of any material backing. We can also take as indirect evidence to the same effect Goldgar's remark that 'during the period of his connection with Prince Frederick, Lyttelton's efforts brought material reward only to Thomson, Gilbert West, and possibly Mallet' (p. 139), the so-called 'Patriot Poets'. Indeed Frederick attended *Eurydice Hissed* on 18 April 1737 with peers like the Earl of Egmont, whose diary had it that 'when any strong passages fell, the Prince, who was there, clapped, especially when in favour of liberty' (cited in Battestin, *Life*, p. 221), and we can imagine a similar picture for *Pasquin*, too, with the place of the Prince of Wales filled by leading opposition politicians. Politics aside, this kind of ostentatious approbation may have conferred the aura of 'cultural glory' upon the author, thus accelerating the town's curiosity and contributing to the popularity of these plays, to which the preface to the 'Dedication to the Public' in *The Historical Register* makes a facetious allusion. Nevertheless, with no material support known, it was the town or the 'Public' that eventually enabled the author to 'pay the Charges of the House', as Fustian put it for Fielding. After all, both Fielding's burgeoning relationship with his patrons and his enviable success in box-office terms resulted in raising more questions as to his status as author. The former helped make him the most outstanding political writer in the contemporary theatre since Gay, but to acknowledge that would be to admit his playing 'an Under-part' in political opposition. His box-office success brought him material independence, by emphasising which, like Pope, Fielding attempted to detach himself from the political 'Under-part', while it seemed to stiffen his subjection to the much distrusted public. No wonder that one of the most consistent issues in *Pasquin* through to *Eurydice Hissed* was the relation of authors to these two kinds of patrons.

As noted earlier, a general critique of 'People of Quality' is embedded in the characterisation of both Trapwit and Fustian in *Pasquin*. The issue is brought into focus in Fustian's dedication and the ensuing dialogue between Fustian and Trapwit, which I have earlier cited. The same issue is rendered even more salient in *Tumble-Down Dick* and *The Historical Register*, as they are accompanied by ironic dedications to 'John Lun' (i.e. John Rich) and the 'Public' respectively, making comments on the convention of dedications itself. The dedication of *Tumble-Down Dick* begins with the remark that '*Pasquin* has put Dedications in so ridiculous a Light, that Patrons may, perhaps, pay some Shame for the future for reading their own Praises'. It refers to Fustian's dedication in Act III, where after decrying that 'a Dedication is generally a Bill drawn for Value therein contain'd; which Value is a Set of nauseous fulsome Compliments' (p. 36), Fustian boasts that in his dedication he has 'carefully avoided [...] Flattery', which he 'mortally' hates (p. 36). However, Fustian's dedication, read by Trapwit for him, turns out to be a self-contradiction in itself:

I might here indulge myself with a Delineation of your Lordship's Character; but as I abhor the least Imputation of Flattery, and as I am certain your Lordship is the only Person in this Nation that does not love to hear your Praises, I shall be silent—only this give me Leave to say, That you have more Wit, Sense, Learning, Honour and Humanity, than all Mankind put together; and your Person comprehends in it every Thing that is beautiful; your air is every Thing that is graceful, your Look every Thing that is majestick, and your Mind is a Store-House, where every Virtue and every Perfection are lodged: To pass by your Generosity, which is so great, so glorious, so diffusive, that like the Sun it eclipses, and makes Stars of all your other Virtues—I could say more— (p. 37)

It is difficult to decide whether Fustian contradicts himself deliberately or not, because of his double capacity as explained in the preceding section. Even if we accept that he knowingly does so and stands for Fielding on the issue, it is still undeniable that, as we have seen in other scenes, he is no less dependent on people of 'the first Quality' than Trapwit. Trapwit would agree with Fustian that a dedication is a 'Bill' demanding some reward for the 'Value' of compliments therein. The

dedicator is obliged to put a politic emphasis on the dedicatee's 'Generosity' in particular, as exemplified by Fustian at the end of the above citation. But Trapwit goes further to betray himself and Fustian as well in choosing to describe the same situation in more radically demystifying terms, so that the two Authors are seen speaking of dedications as the wares of their 'Shop' or 'Trade' and complaining about their dedicatee-customers' failure to pay.

Trapwit and Fustian's complaint can be taken as another rendering, this time by insiders of the 'Trade', of Witmore's criticism of patronage in *The Author's Farce*, and in this regard, the concern about authors' obsequious dependence on unrewarding patrons is similarly oriented both in *Pasquin* and in *The Author's Farce*. In the intervening years, Fielding wrote another couple of unsuccessful dedications, namely, to Walpole (*The Modern Husband*) and to the Earl of Chesterfield (*Don Quixote in England*). Chesterfield was then 'a newly dismissed opposition *grandee*' created by the Excise Crisis in the previous year, whom Fielding eulogised as bulwark of 'liberty' and 'opposition hero' (Cleary, pp. 69–72). As Goldgar rightly remarks, 'two years earlier it had been Robert Walpole whom Fielding had addressed as the "true patriot" and who had been enjoined to triumph over his "enemies at home"' (p. 150). The oscillation signals that the author, like many others, would offer his pen for either the ministry or the opposition, but neither the Prime Minister nor the 'opposition *grandee*' favoured him.⁴¹ The truth is that Fielding, like Trapwit or Fustian, had enough of unrewarding patrons.

It is in the dedication of *Tumble-Down Dick* that Fielding begins to make a significant departure. In this mock-dedication to John Rich, Fielding under the popular name of 'Pasquin' claims that as he 'never yet yielded to any mean or subservient Solicitations of the Great Men in real Life', so he would not 'play an Under-part in that Dramatick Entertainment of Greatness' directed by Rich.

⁴¹ For accounts of the dedication to Walpole, see Battestin, *Life*, pp. 128–29, and Cleary, p. 57–58. Whereas Cleary argues that Fielding intended it as a 'safety measure' to prevent anti-ministerial interpretation of the play, with no real hope for Walpole's patronage, Battestin says that 'with *The Modern Husband* Fielding meant to make his peace with Walpole'. Whichever was the case, Walpole paid no attention to it. For Chesterfield's ignoring of the dedication, see Cleary, p. 72.

Obviously the dedication makes its primary sense with John Rich as the mock-dedicatee in his own right, but he also stands proxy for the 'Great Men in real Life', against whom Fielding/Pasquin has much to say. We should recognise that what made such a statement possible was the sensational success of *Pasquin*, which earned the author something like popular heroism as well as cash. Thus 'Pasquin' gleefully refers to the town's absolute preference for *Pasquin* to Rich's *Marforio*.

I own it was a sensible Pleasure to me to observe the Town, which had before been so favourable to *Pasquin* at his own House, confirming that Applause, by thoroughly condemning the Satire on him at Yours.

By an ironic reversal of fortune, Fielding is not only making a Popian claim, if in passing, to political and moral independence, after all his bids for patronage, but also posing himself as though he were the favourite and advocate of the town, for which he always harbours aversion.

Fielding takes a further step in *The Historical Register*, by dedicating it to the 'public'. The dedication is accompanied by a preface, which ironically ascribes the dedication to the bookseller's shrewd solicitation. The bookseller is well-versed in the 'trade with dramatic writers', it is said, and it is in the name of this bookseller, another example of Fielding's habit of distancing himself from his writing, that the dedicator (Fielding? Medley? 'Pasquin'?) says of the values of a dedication thus:

What, says he, does more service to a book or raises curiosity in the reader equal with 'dedicated to his Grace the Duke of—or the Right Honourable the Earl of—' in an advertisement? I think the patron here may properly be said *to give a name* to the book, and if he gives a present also, what doth he less than a godfather? (15)

The simile of an author as parent and a patron as god-father to a book⁴² is said to have been introduced by the bookseller, too, but what is said here sheds a truthful light on the convention of dedication. As Fustian says, a dedication is a 'Bill' for a 'present'

⁴² The words 'father' and 'patron' derive from the same Latin origin *pater*.

or payment for the compliments given, and in addition to this direct benefit, the 'name' of the dedicatee is expected to raise 'curiosity in the reader' and eventually the 'price' of the work or its author. Thus the aura of 'cultural glory' is itself valorised in the literary market.⁴³ The same demystification of dedication and patronage is further carried on in the dedication proper. Addressing the public, more openly mercantile and philistine, the dedicator seems to feel freer to debunk the monetary relationship between dedicatee and dedicator in sheer matter-of-fact terms.

I hope you will pardon this presumption of this dedication, since I really did not know in what manner to apply for your leave, and since I expect no present in return (the reason, I conceive, which first introduced the ceremony of asking leave among dedicators). For surely it is somewhat absurd to ask a man leave to flatter him, and he must be a very impudent or simple fellow, or both, who will give it. Asking leave to dedicate, therefore, is asking whether you will pay for your dedication, and in that sense I believe it understood by both authors and patrons. (1)

Seeing that 'the least civility to an author or his works hath been, time immemorial, a just title to a Dedication', of which the present dedicator has seen enough by now, there is some truth in his saying:

I am certain no one ever had so great (I may call it) an obligation as myself, seeing that you have honored this my performance with your presence every night of its exhibition, where you have never failed showing the greatest delight and approbation. (15)

⁴³ Linda Zionkowski refers to 'canon formation' as writers' will to monopolise 'authority' in view of the fact that 'authors of status could command a high price for manuscripts': 'Territorial Disputes in the Republic of Letters: Canon Formation and the Literary Profession', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 31 (1990), 3-22. To me, Zionkowski's position seems to give authors too much credit for determining the 'status' in question, literally accepting what they wishfully said, though she is right in recognising the interrelationship between 'status' and 'price'. For instance, Zionkowski claims that 'for Fielding, control over writing must come from within the profession itself, not from authorities outside it' (p. 9), and mentions his idea of the 'thermometer of wit' in *The True Patriot*, in comparison with Johnson's similar idea of a kind of scale of literary authority. The autonomy of the literary profession was an ideal proposition, though, pointing to the contrary reality, for as we are seeing in the present thesis, more urgent was the anxiety about the fact that authors had no intrinsic right to (decide) their 'status' (and price). Fielding's idea of measuring literary merit, too, seems to me to have been an imaginative experiment, denoting his concern about the impossibility or difficulty of fair and valid literary judgement.

It would not be just a polemic exaggeration on Fielding's part to say that the approbation and remuneration denied him by people of quality came from the public, who applauded *The Historical Register* for thirty six performances (Battestin, *Life*, p. 218) as well as *Pasquin*. The public is the sole patron of *The Historical Register* and *Eurydice Hissed*,⁴⁴ because 'though all dramatic entertainments are properly calculated for the public, yet these [...] more particularly belong to [them]' (27), to whom the Author facetiously turns for protection from the 'iniquitous surmises' against him (66).

To be sure, recourse to the public is an essential part of opposition polemics, which works with 'a public, extra-parliamentary following',⁴⁵ appropriating anti-authoritarian energies of popular culture couched in the theatre, ballads, broadsides, and such like.⁴⁶ To secure the opposition satirist's stance, it is also necessary to be or to pose as disinterestedly public-minded and both financially and morally independent of any great man. The popular triumph of *Pasquin* enabled Fielding to claim, however ironically, to be above 'any mean and subservient Solicitations of the Great Men' and to entrench himself as apparent advocate of the anti-establishment, anti-authoritarian theatre, of which the public stood as nominal patron. The aura of such popular heroism empowered Fielding's satire to grow more hilariously audacious towards people of quality and power than ever before, a most notable example of which I will shortly discuss in his intriguing delineation of Lord Dapper in *The Historical Register* and *Eurydice Hissed*. On the other hand, Fielding's tentative reconciliation with the public and appropriation of popular heroism in conjunction with opposition polemics would have been felicitous but for his wry self-awareness as servant to the public. It is perceptible, for instance, in the very 'Dedication to the Public', the underlying idea of which concerns the ambiguous

⁴⁴ The two plays were performed together from 13 April onwards and published in a single-volume edition with the dedication on 7 May 1737 (Cleary, p. 109).

⁴⁵ Paul Langford, *Walpole and the Robinocracy*, The English Satirical Print 1660–1832 Series (Cambridge: Chadwyck and Healey, 1986), p. 23.

⁴⁶ See Langford, and Milton Percival, *Political Ballads Illustrating the Administration Sir Robert Walpole* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1916), p. xix.

status of an author who represents popular opposition to the government, while retaining a fundamental distrust of the 'mob'. The 'aura of anti-establishment heroism' notwithstanding, the Author of the dedication consciously conjures up his likeness to the 'master of the [public] house' (113), that is, the 'servant of the public and no more', as Honestus says to Pillage in *Eurydice Hissed* (198). Ironically, Fielding's self-deprecating revelation of authorship as servitude to the public, for all the illusion of 'mastery', gives an archetypal shape to his portrayal of Walpole, to which I shall return after the discussion of Lord Dapper.

The presence of Lord Dapper alongside Sourwit as spectator at Medley's and Spatter's rehearsals is of great consequence at once in Fielding's politicising of the original rehearsal format and in his 'revenge fantasy' on people of quality. Hunter maintains that Lord Dapper 'represents the typical playgoer and becomes the surrogate for those of us viewing Fielding's outer play' (p. 66). In my view, however, his significance reaches much further than that. Unlike Sourwit, Lord Dapper says or does virtually nothing, which is significant in itself, for he represents the nobility's failure to lend adequate cultural guidance under Walpole's regime. The point is brought into relief by the fact that Lord Dapper is cast as one of the spectators rather than a character in the inner play, just like the aristocratic spectators in Gay's *What D'Ye Call It* or *The Rehearsal at Gotham*. The nature of Dapper's failure is best dramatised in the following scene, where in Medley's absence Sourwit calls attention to the responsibility of 'such men as your lordship', which is all lost on this uncomprehending nobleman.

SOURWIT Well, my lord, what does your lordship think of what you have seen?

LORD DAPPER Faith, sir, I did not observe it, but it's damned stuff, I am sure.

SOURWIT I think so, and I hope your lordship will not encourage it. They are such men as your lordship, who must reform the age. If persons of your exquisite and refined taste will give a sanction to politer entertainments, the town will soon be ashamed of laughing at what they do now.

LORD DAPPER (*gazing around the theater*).

Really, this is a very bad house.

SOURWIT It is not indeed so large as the others, but I think one hears better in it.

LORD DAPPER Pox of hearing—one can't see! One's self, I mean; here are no looking glasses. I love Lincoln's Inn Fields, for that reason, better than any house in town.

SOURWIT Very true, my lord, but I wish your lordship would think it worthy your consideration, as the morals of a people depend (as has been so often and well-proved) entirely on the public diversions, it would be of great consequence that those of the sublimest kind should meet with your lordship's and the rest of the nobility's countenance.

LORD DAPPER Mr. Sourwit, I am always ready to give my countenance to any thing of that kind which might bring the best company together, for as one does not go to see the play, but the company, I think that's chiefly to be considered, and therefore I am always ready to countenance good plays.

SOURWIT No one is a better judge what is so than your lordship.

LORD DAPPER Not I indeed, Mr. Sourwit, but as I am one half of the play in the Green Room, talking to the actresses, and the other half in the boxes, talking to the women of quality, I have an opportunity of seeing something of the play, and perhaps may be as good a judge as another.

Enter Medley.

MEDLEY My Lord, the ladies cannot begin yet, if your lordship will honour me in the Green Room, where you will find it pleasanter than upon this cold stage—

LORD DAPPER With all my heart.—Come, Mr. Sourwit.

SOURWIT I attend your lordship.

Exeunt.

PROMPTER Thou art a sweet judge of plays, indeed, and yet it is in the power of such sparks as these to damn an honest fellow, both in his profit and reputation.

Exit.

(I. 249)

As Sourwit says, 'public diversions' are as a whole the index of the 'morals of a people', to preserve which is integral to the *noblesse oblige*. However, Lord Dapper is not only hopelessly inane and negligent of encouraging 'good plays' (referred to dubiously by Dapper himself) but accessory to the cultural deterioration by countenancing baser entertainments. We are reminded of Fustian's implicit complaint to Sneerwell about the countenance given to 'Entertainments' by those alleged to possess refined tastes. With Lord Dapper, the criticism becomes a lot more articulate and emphatic, in keeping with the enhanced boldness of *The Historical Register* and *Eurydice Hissed*.

Lord Dapper is a caricature of Lord Hervey, publicly known as Walpole's agent in the House of Lords. Critics agree that the 'Adventurer in Politics' who attacked Fielding's *Historical Register* and *Eurydice Hissed* in *The Daily Gazetteer* (7 May

1737) was most probably Lord Hervey,⁴⁷ while none of them attend to the possibility that Lord Dapper was specifically modelled on Lord Hervey. 'Lord Fanny' was the celebrated sobriquet given him by Pope, and 'for a whole literary generation', Hunter remarks, he passed for 'the slimy, obsequious, sexually ambivalent fop who squandered his considerable talent in the service of questionable political values and a voracious ego' (p. 91). To me, it appears almost beyond doubt that like Beau Didapper in *Joseph Andrews*, Lord Dapper in *The Historical Register* and *Eurydice Hissed* closely stands for Lord Hervey and all he represents. Hence the effeminate lord's love of 'looking glasses' (*The Historical Register*, I. 262) and four hours' hair-powdering (*Eurydice Hissed*, 10). His effeminate character is symptomatic of the age's 'luxury, effeminacy and debauchery' (*The Historical Register*, II. 24), a recurrent theme in *The Historical Register* with the castrato Farinello and the auctioneer Mr. 'Hen' whose part was actually played by an actress. In the auction scene, Lord Dapper's failure goes even further, as he forgets that Hen's auction is but a part of Medley's rehearsal and makes a bid himself for a 'very considerable quantity of Interest at Court' (II. 26). With the auctioneer Hen standing for Walpole and the auction for his 'patronage game' (Cleary, p. 99), Lord Dapper's bidding hilariously exposes Lord Hervey's obsequious slavery to the Robinocracy by 'Interest' and further the overall reality of the *noblesse* turned 'patrician banditti'.

Thus it can be argued that Lord Dapper/Hervey is spectator (and partaker) of the political farce 'authored' by Walpole. As summed up earlier in the present section, *The Historical Register* is made up of roughly five episodes, of which the first and last, depicting 'politicians' and 'patriots' of Corsica respectively, are more directly political than the other three apparently dealing with public diversions or theatrical affairs. In each episode, the Walpole figure is an author or a quasi-author, so that even

⁴⁷ See Cleary, pp. 107–13, Battestin, p. 224, and Hume, p. 236n. Hunter identifies Thomas and John in the dedication as the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Hervey respectively (p. 234n), and Cleary (pp. 111–12) tentatively argues that Lord Hervey is the most plausible candidate for both the 'witty spark' who cries to 'Bob' the resemblance to him of an ass on a sign (117) and 'a certain person [who] is sometimes the author, often the corrector of the press, and always the patron of the Gazetteer' (173) in the dedication.

'Quidam', the last and boldest caricature of Walpole in *The Historical Register*, is referred to as 'Quidam the fiddler', like the 'fiddling' Johnson of Cheshire, author of *Hurlothrumbo*. The 'modern Apollo' in the opening scene of Act III provides a central example in this regard. The political overtone of this scene is made patent at the outset, where in one of his sanest moments, Medley replies to Sourwit's question 'why modern?' by pronouncing that 'vice and folly are not the invention of our age: but I will maintain, that what I intend to ridicule in the following scene is *the whole and sole production and invention of some people living*' (III. 9: italics added). The 'inventor' presented is a 'bastard of Apollo' casting *King John* with a 'Prompter', soon joined by 'Ground-Ivy' and his son 'Pistol'.⁴⁸ Unmistakably, Ground Ivy and Pistol stand for Colley and Theophilus Cibber, while the bastard of Apollo is primarily modelled on Charles Fleetwood, the then manager of Drury Lane, known for his heavy dependence on the prompter (Lewis, p. 190), and also associated with Theophilus Cibber (Cleary, p. 100). We are duly recalled to another bastard of Apollo or Phoebus, namely, 'Phaeton' in *Tumble-Down Dick*, whose 'fall', it can be argued, is travestied by Rich's pantomimical 'tumbling'. What is important is that across such individual applications, the 'bastard of Apollo' represents every author of 'illegitimate' genres such as farces, harlequinades, pantomimes, and other indefinable, hotchpotch entertainments. Thus what Medley says of Pistol is also true of any 'bastard' author: 'Pistol is every insignificant fellow in town, who fancies himself of great consequence, and is of none; he is my Lord Pistol, Captain Pistol, Counsellor Pistol, Alderman Pistol, Beau Pistol, and—and—Odso, what was I going to say?' (III. 44). Prime Minister Pistol, of course. The 'bastardization of drama' (Cleary, p. 90) becomes identifiable with the bastardisation of politics.

To understand the state/stage reciprocity in the Walpole era, it is useful to begin with the following observation by Hunter:

⁴⁸ *King John* was rehearsed, as altered by Colley Cibber, at Drury Lane in 1736, but withdrawn for protests from the actors in February 1737 (see Hume, p. 235n, and Cleary, p. 311n).

To invoke the world-as-stage metaphor was, in most ages, to make grand mimetic claims for artist's perception of Nature, but in Fielding's age the peculiar narrowing of the 'world' to politics—so that 'state' and 'stage' were the interchangeable vehicle and tenor—focused artistic possibilities and audience expectations in a specific way. Steeped as it was in the state/stage metaphor, the eighteenth-century mind found the transitory world of events and the immutable world of art easily reciprocal: art *was* politics, and politics was art. (p. 62)

Hunter is quite right in detecting the 'peculiar narrowing' of the traditional 'world-as-stage metaphor' to the state/stage parity in Fielding's time. Even so, Hunter's explanation is not sufficient in itself, because it leaves out a more important peculiarity in contemporary portraiture of Walpole. As Rogers rightly remarks, 'the prime minister was repeatedly characterised as Punch, or as a *farceur*, or as a fiddler, or as a gang boss, or a master of ceremonies' (p. 29):

Walpole was accused of making politics into a business, a kind of crooked scheme to defraud the public, or alternatively a rigged lottery. [...] Again, the Opposition claimed that Walpole protected guilty men, and covered up malpractices: hence his identification with Wild. But the main thrust of the case emerged in satiric portrayals of Walpole as the great showman of state.

As his premiership was distrusted as unconstitutional and therefore 'illegitimate', Walpole was consistently identified with every 'illegitimate' operator in every sector, especially in the theatre. Thus it is not legitimate drama but 'farce', representative of all illegitimate theatrical forms for Fielding, that characterises 'politics', when Medley in *The Historical Register* replies to Sourwit's question 'how is your political connected with your theatrical?':

Oh, very easily. When my politics come to a farce, they very naturally lead me to the playhouse where, let me tell you, there are some politicians too, where there is lying, flattering, dissembling, promising, deceiving, and undermining, as well as in any court in Christendom. (I. 95)

No wonder that Fielding's anti-Walpole satire culminates in *Eurydice Hissed*, where the 'mighty minister' is but the 'author of a mighty farce'. Furthermore,

Eurydice Hissed evidences the final and most distinctive feature in Fielding's portrayal of Walpole, that is, his self-identification with Walpole. As mentioned earlier, Pillage in *Eurydice Hissed* represents at once Fielding and Walpole, so that Pillage/Fielding's damned farce *Eurydice* stands for Pillage/Walpole's Excise Bill. Lewis accounts for this as follows:

Fielding's simultaneous presentation of himself and Walpole as Pillage is certainly unexpected and may seem puzzling at first sight, but it is also ingenious. By pretending to treat the damnation of *Eurydice* as a tragic calamity, Fielding invites his audience to laugh at him; but it is he, paradoxically, who has the last laugh. His friends and political allies would have admired his ability to laugh at himself in public, and they would also have appreciated the extreme impertinence of his identification of himself with Walpole and of the parallel he draws between the fates of *Eurydice* and the Excise Bill. Fielding's enemies and political opponents would have enjoyed the opportunity of laughing at him, especially as he himself provided it, but he cleverly turned the tables on them. By making them laugh at him, he trapped them into laughing at Walpole as well. (p. 195)

Lewis is right to some extent, but Fielding's voluntary merging with Walpole is much more than a politically 'ingenious' gambit. In this regard, Battestin sounds a lot more convincing. After describing Fielding's conduct at this juncture, that is, his flirtation with Drury Lane⁴⁹ and disreputable managerial demeanour at the Haymarket, Battestin explains that Fielding displays a 'puzzling exercise in self-ridicule' through Pillage. Battestin adds thus:

What can have disposed Fielding to dramatize the demeaning equation of Walpole and himself? He was of course capable of laughing at his own expense—even of poking fun at the outlandish figure he made, with his burly physique and length of chin and nose. But Walpole at this period of Fielding's life was The Enemy, the despised corrupter of his country. To present himself in this way, as essentially indistinguishable from the minister, seems a penitential act of self-mortification. (*Life*, p. 221)

⁴⁹ *Eurydice* was staged at Drury Lane on 19 February 1737. With regard to its appearance there, Hume suggests a convincing hypothesis, with a couple of circumstantial evidences, that 'Fleetwood almost undoubtedly commissioned it' (p. 223). Considering Fielding's past invitation there after his successes at the Haymarket in 1730–31, it seems probable to me, too, that Drury Lane was willing to capture the 'Author of Pasquin', whose authorship of *Eurydice* was duly emphasised in the advertising bill (see Hume, p. 222).

Battestin's interpretation is supported by internal evidence, too, as we see Spatter, Fielding's second self, apparently resigning himself to the 'sentence' passed on his farce in a language well worthy of *Jonathan Wild*:

what signifies denying the fact after sentence and dying with a lie in your mouth? No, no, rather, like a good pious criminal, rejoice that in being put to shame you make some atonement for your sins. And I hope to do so in the following play, for it is, Mr. Sourwit, of a most instructive kind and conveys to us a beautiful image of the instability of human greatness and the uncertainty of friends. (19)

When applied to Walpole, this is a wickedly inauspicious warning of his future damnation as well as that in the past. Oddly enough, it indicates, as Battestin says, 'a penitential act of self-mortification' or 'self-ridicule' on Fielding's own part, too. In addition, though it is rendered most intense in Pillage's case, such 'self-ridicule' is apparent enough in his delineation of other Authors as well, for as I have highlighted in the preceding section, they are all accomplices with Fielding in the 'crime' or farce of authorship.

In this identification of illegitimate state with illegitimate stage, Pope renders a significantly contrastive case to Fielding's. As Ian A. Bell rightly points out, Pope's formula in his contribution to anti-Walpole literature can be defined in terms of his 'schematic polarisation' of 'the heroic and the bathetic' in letters and politics (p. 53). Depicting these two categories as mutually exclusive, Pope conducts himself (and the Stuarts) as embodiment of all that is antithetical to what Cibber and Walpole represent. For Pope, the 'moral authority' of government depends on its 'fiscal policies and practice', so that Walpole's dubious 'arts of government' testify his 'power devoid of authority'.⁵⁰ It is in this context that he persists in accentuating his economic, political, and moral insulation from Walpole's regime, thus creating and upholding his 'heroic' image of moral integrity and incontestable literary authority. In

⁵⁰ Ian A. Bell, "'Not Lucre's Madman": Pope, Money, and Independence', in *Alexander Pope: Essays for the Tercentenary*, ed. by Colin Nicholson (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), pp. 53–67 (p. 54).

sharp contrast to Pope, Fielding is no more capable of such 'polarisation' even in his most intense opposition to Walpole than of detaching himself altogether from whomever he would call an 'author of a farce'. It is true that in conjunction with opposition polemics, Fielding's anti-Walpole theatre undertakes to explode the authority of the Walpole government. Nevertheless it is not achieved through the Popian legitimisation of his own moral and aesthetic authority at the expense of Walpole's, but through a self-deriding exposure of his own want of authority equated to Walpole's illegitimate 'power void of authority'.

From *The Author's Farce* onwards, Fielding's self-awareness as author revealed itself as debilitatingly uncertain. His ambition to write proper drama and to enlist in the Scriblerian campaign notwithstanding, we find the picture of an awkward 'author of a farce' implanted in Fielding's self-portraits, not to mention the hostile representations of him by his enemies and mockers. As authorship is itself conceived as reduced to a bathetic trade or a farce or even a crime, the word 'author' is never used by Fielding without a certain irony attached to it, whether applied to himself or to others. Accordingly his own dunciadic mockery of 'authors' always appears commingled with awkward apologia for them, from whom he was unable to categorically detach himself, thus more often than not resulting in self-mockery. He did manoeuvre to stand out by borrowing literary authority from the Scriblerians or by bidding for the approbation of political grandees. However, not only was he constantly faced with frustrating rebuffs from either side, but the more he hankered for 'authorisation', the more he became aware of the withdrawal of literary authority from him. Ironically, it is this anxiety about authorship devoid of authority that Fielding would twist into a subversive formula to expose Walpole's 'power devoid of authority' in his anti-Walpole theatre.

The success of Fielding's anti-Walpole plays brought him both fortune and fame, of which the consequences appeared in two mutually conflicting ways. Clearly, his satire became bolder and bolder, as he became conscious of both public and opposition backing. Fielding more often than not appears to exult at the 'aura' of

popular heroism in association with self-righteous opposition to the tarnished Walpole ministry. He located a standpoint from which to declaim against Walpole's regime, which was as repugnant to him as to many of his contemporaries, and also against the deficiencies of people of quality, represented most notably by Lord Dapper. Popular approbation was entrapping as well as enabling, however, for Fielding found himself entrenched as author-manager of 'farces' at the Haymarket. He staged anti-government 'farces', not purely out of principled opposition, but to no inconsiderable extent, in view of the town's inclination towards them. Fielding the theatrical manager was not essentially different from Rich, Cibber, or Fleetwood, or indeed from Walpole the political manager. Fielding's consciousness of this complicity culminates in the characterisation of Pillage as a scandalous 'author of a farce' and 'master of a playhouse', who nonetheless represents Fielding himself, the author-master of the Haymarket Theatre. As is familiar to us from the pages of his novels, the 'master of a public house' in Fielding's fiction is always primarily characterised by his venality, which in turn discloses his servitude or slavery to the public's money, the nominal mastership notwithstanding. Fielding dramatises his enthrallment to the 'illusion' of mastery, in the allegory of Bob in the 'Dedication to the Public' thus:

as two gentlemen were walking the street together, the one said to the other, upon spying the figure of an ass hung out, 'Bob! Bob! Look yonder! Some impudent rascal has hung out your picture on a sign-post.' The grave companion, who had the misfortune to be extremely shortsighted, fell into a violent rage, and calling for the *master of the house*, threatened to prosecute him for exposing his features in that public manner. The poor landlord, as you may well conceive, was extremely astonished, and denied the fact, upon which the witty spark, who had just mentioned the resemblance, appeals to the mob now assembled together, who soon smoked the jest, and agreed with him that the sign was the exact picture of the gentleman. At last a good-natured man, taking compassion of the poor figure, whom he saw the jest of the multitude, whispered in his ear, 'Sir, I see your eyes are bad, and that your friend is a rascal, and imposes on you; the sign hung out is the sign of an ass, nor will your picture be here unless you draw it yourself.' (107: italics added)

Political overtones aside, the predicament of the 'master of the house' can be said to reflect the vulnerable position Fielding finds himself in as author, in relation to both

the easily misled and therefore unreliable public or the 'mob' and the civil authority threatening prosecution, on which we have touched in discussing the abortion of Luckless's puppet show by the intrusion of a Justice of the Peace in *The Author's Farce*. The situation of this 'master of the house' would turn out, with hindsight, to mirror that of Fielding the 'master of a playhouse', when Walpole successfully 'managed' to get the Licensing Act passed in his 'House' (of Commons) in June, only a month after the publication of this 'Dedication', and consequently deprived the author of his livelihood (Hume, pp. 251, 254). Fielding would turn to partisan journalism, a truer form of hack writing, and return in 1739 as 'Hercules Vinegar', whose name oddly coalesced 'the heroic and the bathetic'. For the moment, in 1737, 'so ends the Farce'.

Chapter II. Farce at Hockley in the Hole

It is sufficiently known that some Years since, to the great Terror of the small Vulgar, I entered upon the Title of *Captain*; this I did without the Consent of any one Person living, or without any other Commission or Authority than what I immediately derived from myself.

The Champion (15 November 1739)

As for myself, I am so far from desiring to derive any Honour from my Ancestors, that I have retired to so obscure a Place as *Hockley in the Hole*, where my humble Habitation often reminds me that *Hercules* himself was no more than a Descendant of *Adam*.

The Champion (17 November 1739)

Jonathan married Elizabeth, daughter of Scragg Hollow, of Hockley-in-the Hole, Esq.; and by her had Jonathan, who is the illustrious subject of these memoirs.

Jonathan Wild (I. 2)¹

1. The Fame and Shame of Early Eighteenth-Century Journalism

The Dunciad of 1743 passes its verdict on 'Journals, Medleys, Merc'ries, Magazines' that they all belong to the 'Grub-street race' (I. 42, 44), being 'Sons of a Day' (II. 307). In fact, 'hostility to newspapers' dates back to their first appearance in England, and Ben Jonson, says Charles A. Knight, 'was an early instance of many who attacked the unreliability and dishonesty of newspapers'.² Lennard J. Davis also remarks that 'the standard attacks on news focused on the fact that news was made up, fictional, and only published to cheat people of their money'.³ None less than Addison and Steele, to whose successful exemplars virtually all eighteenth-century periodical writers owed their staple formulas, condemned 'the unworthy calling of the

¹ The present quotation is from the revised 1754 edition, *Jonathan Wild*, ed. by David Nokes (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982), as it does not appear in the original 1743 edition. Further references to *Jonathan Wild* are to the 1743 edition, *The Life of Jonathan Wild the Great* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), unless otherwise stated, and given after quotations in the text. For a full account of the revision, see Appendix, *The Life of Jonathan Wild the Great*, pp. 265–89.

² Charles A. Knight, 'Bibliography and the Shape of the Literary Periodical in the Early Eighteenth Century', *The Library: Quarterly Journal of Bibliography*, 6th series 8 (1986), 232–48 (p. 233).

³ Lennard J. Davis, *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 75.

newspaper writer, who panders to the baser human instincts, particularly to a curiosity after unconfirmed and irrelevant rumours' (Knight, p. 233). Steele and Addison's censure reflects their intention to draw a sharp line between hack writing for newspapers and the more serious literary (and political) journalism they professed. However, the essential ephemerality of periodical writing itself, with its periodicity and topicality, 'written for immediate gain and immediate consumption', was hardly considered compatible with the idea of a permanent literary fame.

Despite the great exemplars Addison and Steele, periodical writing in the first half of the century was generally considered hack-work, its practitioners in no way worthy of citizenship in the republic of letters.⁴

In addition to the ephemeral nature of periodical writing, the shameful reputation of newswriters or journalists in general had much to do with their subordinate status in the industry. It is well known that the lapse of the Licensing Act in 1695 was followed by a tremendous expansion of the newspaper industry, with an increasing number of 'authors' working in various capacities for bookseller-proprietors.⁵ Indeed the 'emergence of "Grub Street" as a concept, defining and localising a mass of hackney scribblers earning a precarious living by their writings was coincidental with the primary development of the newspaper press' (Harris, p. 38), so that the Grubbean reputation of newspaper or any periodical writing was there from the outset. From the outset, too, booksellers were particularly attracted to the newspaper business for its double commercial value: it meant at once a direct source of income and an indispensable vehicle for advertising their wares.⁶ Its importance for booksellers is

⁴ Bertrand A. Goldgar, 'Fielding, Periodicals, and the Idea of Literary Fame', *Journal of Newspaper and Periodical History*, 2 (1985), 2-9 (p. 3).

⁵ Michael Harris refers to the ambiguous meaning of the 'author' in the newspaper industry, with an account of the 'hierarchy of function' from mere correspondents or newsgatherers to principal essayists: 'Journalism as a Profession or Trade in the Eighteenth Century', in *Author/Publisher Relations during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, ed. by Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Oxford: Oxford Polytechnic Press, 1983), pp. 37-62 (p. 40).

⁶ See Terry Belanger, 'Publishers and Writers in Eighteenth-Century England', in *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. by Isabel Rivers (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), pp. 5-25 (pp. 8-9), and also Michael Harris, 'Periodicals and the Book Trade', in *Development*

attested by the fact that 'most London booksellers, however prosperous, were involved in newspaper distribution' (Harris, 'Periodicals', p. 71). Despite the increasing competition and piracy, London booksellers managed to achieve control over 'all areas of output' in the book trade by 1730 (Harris, 'Journalism', p. 44), to which their successful exploitation of the newspaper press made no minor contribution.⁷

The subordinate standing of authors in relation to bookseller-proprietors was therefore a given in the periodical business. According to Harris, however, the overall status of authors had even 'deteriorated since the Queen Anne period, when individuals often set up and ran their own papers' ('Journalism', p. 44). 'After 1712', adds Harris, 'the growing expense of bringing a new journal into the world and the intervention of the booksellers [...] made the prospects of going it alone extremely daunting', and in consequence, 'group ownership' became predominant from the late 1720s. Under fairer circumstances, the principal author(s), normally but not invariably with the editorial role, would possibly be holding some shares, thus entitled to profits of the venture (Harris, 'Journalism', p. 44). Under 'group ownership', though, even principal authors tended to be minor share-holders at best, with their rights curtailed accordingly. Harris illustrates this by contrasting the case of *The Champion* (November 1739–) against that of *The Grub-Street Journal* (1730–37). He explains that the 'joint authors of the *Grub-Street Journal* [...] initially held at least five of the twelve shares', while Fielding owned no more than two out of sixteen shares of the later journal ('Journalism', p. 45). Even so, Fielding was in a more favourable situation than his co-editor James Ralph, who was probably no better than

of the English Book Trade, 1700–1899, ed. by Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Oxford: Oxford Polytechnic Press, 1981), pp. 66–94 (pp. 70–71).

⁷ John Feather observes that the 'publisher' was central in the eighteenth-century book trade, especially taking over the part of financing the manufacture from the printer, who had dominated the trade in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: 'The Commerce of Letters: The Study of the Eighteenth-Century Book Trade', *ECS*, 17 (1984), 405–24 (p. 409). See also Alvin Kernan, *Samuel Johnson and the Impact of Print* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 62. As for terminology, Belanger distinguishes the 'bookseller' from the 'publisher', with preference for the former (p. 8), which is commonly used by other critics, too. As exemplified in Feather's remark, the 'publisher' mainly means one who financed the trade, but the 'bookseller' was usually concerned with both financing and retailing in the eighteenth century.

a 'salaried assistant' (Cleary, p. 118). There are no known documents as to the scale of remuneration that accrued to Fielding and Ralph from working on *The Champion*, but some rough estimate can be made in accordance with the average fee of a guinea per week for ordinary journalists (Harris, p. 52). Proprietors themselves, according to Harris, could expect no more than five pounds a week or much less than that (p. 53), which suggests that the profit allotted to a minor share-holding editor like Fielding was presumably not munificent by any means.

Harris adds that 'the position of the author within an individual paper was liable to fluctuate' (pp. 45–46), subject to the intervention of proprietors. Thus he tentatively ascribes Fielding's 'departure from the *Champion* in 1741' to a 'series of disagreements with the bookseller backers over editorial policy',⁸ from which Harris concludes that 'the booksellers generally did not regard their author colleagues in the London press as anything like free agents' (pp. 49–50). When Fielding was initially driven by financial distress to accept the condition that 'he contribute time and talent in return for "two-sixteenth shares" of the potential profits of *The Champion*', proposed by the booksellers who 'were taking a risk backing a new journal in a crowded market' (Cleary, p. 118) and therefore expected to duly tighten their demands on the nominal editor(s), the implications of entering into such a contract must have been sufficiently known to him. Neither a permanent literary fame nor such unlimited 'Authority' as Fielding claimed in inaugurating himself as 'Champion' (15 November 1739) would accompany the authors professing journalism.

Integral to the expansion of the press was a 'tremendous growth in the production of political literature', which Downie argues the passing of the Triennial Act in December 1694 and the expiry of the Licensing Act in 1695 concurred to cause.⁹ The institution of political journalism was stimulated by the 'exigencies of the party

⁸ Battestin has a slightly different account: 'Short of money as he was, Fielding in December [1740] began nevertheless to give less time to *The Champion*—reasoning, perhaps, that with his two-sixteenth shares of the profits guaranteed, he could leave the work of conducting the paper to Ralph while he attempted other literary ventures that would augment his income' (*Life*, p. 289).

⁹ J. A. Downie, *Robert Harley and the Press: Propaganda and Public Opinion in the Age of Swift and Defoe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 1.

system' (Hanson, p. 2), which made the press a 'highly pressurized arena for dispute' over fundamental and topical political issues between the contending parties.¹⁰ Thus Downie remarks that 'in the course of the reign of Queen Anne a government press policy began to emerge' (p. 1), giving the credit to Robert Harley, whom Hanson describes as 'one of the first politicians to realize how vital was a good press to the prestige of government' (p. 88). Under the tumultuous circumstances of fierce party conflict between 1701 and 1715 (Downie, p. 5), Harley recruited Defoe and Swift among others as operators of his 'propaganda machine' in the *Review* (1704–) and in *The Examiner* (1710–) respectively, while the Whig counterpart was conducted 'under the leadership of Steele' and Addison, too (Downie, pp. 3, 12). Indeed the repute of the reign of Queen Anne as the "golden age" of the periodical essay' owed a great deal to the vigour of party propaganda in the periodical press (p. 9).

Considering the heavy reliance of political propaganda on fictions, symbols, allegories, and other literary tropes, as well as the literary identity of the propagandists themselves, it is 'virtually impossible', as Downie puts it, 'to divorce literary and political considerations' in early-eighteenth-century journalism (p. 15). Even so, Ivey argues that 'political journalism', of the narrower definition, had to deal with the general distaste for factiousness, thus becoming a 'particularly vexed form of writing' (p. v). The 'political periodical' of Queen Anne's reign 'did not attain the degree of respect given to its more literary counterpart' (Ivey, p. 2).

Despite the fact that such distinguished writers as Addison, Steele, and Swift wrote political journalism, it still had a reputation as a vehicle for 'hacks', writers who, like the hackney coaches from which the name derives, were available for hire. (p. 21)

After all, 'Addison, Steele, and Swift' belonged to the prestige class of political journalists, whom Downie typifies as the 'gentleman-writer who dabbled in political

¹⁰ Kathy JoAnne Ivey, 'My Persona, My Self: The Political Periodical Personae of Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, Jonathan Swift, and Daniel Defoe' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Rochester, 1991), p. v.

literature' (p. 12). Down the hierarchy came the 'ordinary party scribbler' who made a living out of partisan writing, and further down the 'true hack in the mires of Grub Street' (pp. 12-14). To the 'professional' authors in political journalism was naturally attached the smear of venality and hypocrisy as well as factiousness, for they were regarded as 'hirelings' under the disguise of serving the public cause. As Harris says, 'any form of writing to order and for cash was viewed with self-righteous distaste by those outside the business, and both circumstances tended to appear in their starkest form in the context of the newspaper press' ('Journalism', p. 57), especially the political press with its peculiar façade of disinterestedness and self-righteousness. Hence, for instance, Defoe's persistent denial that he was the 'paid henchman of Harley' (Hanson, p. 95). Even within the first class, Swift, for example, should be distinguished from Bolingbroke, who is reputed to have made the distinction himself to the effect that 'Swift was simply a hired writer' in *The Examiner*.¹¹ Indeed Harley had offered to 'pay' Swift, but the alleged 'hired writer' declined the degrading proposal (Ellis, p. xxix). Despite the 'great distance between Swift and the hired writers' like Defoe (p. xxix), the way people like Bolingbroke and Harley would treat Swift is revealing enough and must have been so to the author himself.¹²

Such being the reputation of political journalism in its 'golden age', it hardly changed for the better in the Georgian or indeed Walpolean age. The most important development in this new phase of political journalism was the appearance of *The Craftsman* (5 December 1726–), the leading opposition paper against Robert Walpole. *The Craftsman* was chiefly written by Bolingbroke, Pulteney, and 'a minor wit named Nicholas Amhurst' (Goldgar, p. 43) under the pseudonym of 'Caleb D'Anvers'. Hanson gives it the best credit for raising the 'whole tone of political controversy in the press', making 'criticisms which [...] were both pungent and well informed' and bringing the 'whole field of politics [...] under discussion' (p. 108).

¹¹ Frank Ellis, Introduction, *Swift vs. Mainwaring: The Examiner and The Medley*, ed. by Frank H. Ellis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), p. xxviii.

¹² I will discuss this issue in more detail with regard to the variable status and price of a ministerial writer in Chapter IV, Section 1.

Indeed the launching of *The Craftsman* signalled the 'beginning of a new and vigorous opposition' to Walpole through the press (Goldgar, p. 43). Walpole responded to the provocation of the opposition press in two ways, that is, by suppressing opposition papers on one hand and subsidising ministerial papers on the other.¹³ After several attempts to prosecute Richard Francklin the publisher of *The Craftsman* in 1729–31, for instance (Hanson, pp. 67–69), direct legal prosecutions became less frequent after 1731, with the Walpole ministry entrenched in power (Hanson, p. 66). Instead, Walpole chose, in his typical way, to 'buy up' opposition writers, which Black argues became more effective than legal actions and somehow gave him the ground on which to stress the venality of opposition journalists and the willingness of their patrons to take advantage of it (pp. 148–49). Walpole also employed writers in ministerial papers, but they usually manoeuvred on the 'purely passive' and therefore disadvantaged ground of contradicting the criticisms of their opponents (Hanson, p. 116). Besides, the opposition press, especially *The Craftsman*, constantly charged that Walpole 'relied on mediocrities for his defence' (Hanson, p. 112), which was indeed part of the staple opposition slur against Walpole's patronage of inferior writers. Hanson cites even Lord Hervey admitting the all but absolute superiority of the opposition press, especially of *The Craftsman*: 'All the best writers against the Court were concerned in the Craftsman, which made it a much better written paper than any of that sort that were published on the side of the Court' (p. 117). The prime of the opposition press, though, came to a period with 'Bolingbroke's departure to France in 1735', followed by 'a noticeable decline in the tone of the press' from 'all the great arguments of politicks [*sic*]' to 'nothing but personalities and scurrility' (Hanson, p. 69). The ebbing of the opposition tide was such that Walpole felt confident enough to cut the cost of running his 'propaganda machine', by amalgamating all government-subsidised papers into *The Daily Gazetteer* in June 1735 (Hanson, p. 115). Though *Common Sense* would take over the

¹³ For detailed accounts of government measures for suppression and subsidisation, see Hanson, Chs. 3–4, and Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 131–65. Black's account is more relevant to Walpole.

lead in the opposition press from 1737, and Fielding and Ralph's *Champion* rejuvenate it to some extent, neither journal, it is generally accepted, attained the prestige and impact of *The Craftsman*.

Walpole had his share, a considerable one, in further degrading political, especially ministerial writers in the republic of letters. He contributed to stigmatising the job of ministerial writing by employing only 'mediocrities' for the menial task of defending the government. Furthermore, in reaction to the opposition charge that the writers in his camp were 'mercenaries' as well as 'mediocrities', Walpole and his 'mercenaries' indirectly admitted it to be true by countercharging the no less 'mercenary nature of opposition writing' (Black, p. 124), as noted above. The disclosure of the extent of Walpole's subsidies by the Parliamentary Committee of Secrecy after his fall confirmed the 'fact' of what the opposition press had constantly accused him of doing. This was a significant revelation, not because Walpole and his writers would have been hiding it, but because it became an established 'fact', not merely a commonplace in the opposition 'rhetoric' if supported with material evidence. 'So great was the uproar caused by the disclosure', says Hanson, 'that no ministry in the immediate future could dare to pursue like measures' (p. 118). Yet it is not necessarily that future ministries did not turn to 'like measures' at all, but that even when they did, it was not quite on Walpole's scale or with his cheek. What matters most in the present discussion is that the stigma was left behind, only to debase further the already lowly reputation of political journalism since Queen Anne's reign. It was with the stigma on them that future journalists and especially ministerialists (including Fielding in *The True Patriot* and *The Jacobite's Journal*) would be writing in the murky atmosphere of 'nothing but personalities and scurrility'.

The reputation as hirelings notwithstanding, it seems that authors rarely received regular and faithful support from their political patrons any more than from the bookseller-proprietors. The politicians tended to employ pens willing to represent their cause to the public against that of their adversaries, and to dismiss or simply

neglect them when interests slackened. Harris even contends that at least in this regard, Robert Walpole provided his journalists with higher and more regular rewards than the opposition politicians ('Journalism', p. 54). Harris could have found possible evidence to his argument, for instance, in Fielding's curious panegyric on the generosity of the 'fat Gentleman' (Walpole) in *The Opposition: A Vision*,¹⁴ which has been a vexing problem to Fielding critics. Battestin interprets it as a manifestation of Walpole's buying over Fielding's pen at that juncture, 'which was for sale to others' as well as to the opposition leaders who, Fielding felt, failed to reward him adequately for his service from the days of Haymarket to the editorship of *The Champion* (*Life*, p. 324).¹⁵ I have mentioned in the preceding chapter that there is no known evidence of Fielding's reception of material support at the Haymarket from his Broad Bottom patrons, and as will be shown in the following section, it is unlikely that for his editorship of *The Champion* he had any other remuneration than his two-sixteenth shares of the profits. In my view, though, it is not correct to say that Walpole offered better provision for his journalists. For this matter, we need to take at least a couple of factors into consideration. First, though 'there was some justification', says Downie, 'in *The Craftsman's* complaint about "the great encouragement which hath been lately given to these writers by a certain gentleman, at the public expense"',¹⁶ some strategy of exaggeration was certainly working for the propagandist purpose. For instance, William Arnall of *Free Briton* was said by James Ralph to have been 'taken from the engrossing desk to defend the minister, of whose favour he seemed, on many occasions to enjoy a greater share than any other mercenary', but Downie shows that it was clearly much more than the bare truth (pp.

¹⁴ *The Opposition: A Vision* (London, 1742), p. 20. Though the imprint shows the year 1742, *The Opposition* was in fact published in December 1741 (Battestin, *Life*, p. 692). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

¹⁵ See also his 'Fielding's Changing Politics and *Joseph Andrews*', *Philological Quarterly*, 39 (1960), 39–55 [p. 40], and Bertrand A. Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1976), pp. 203–08. Cleary sees in *The Opposition* 'a hope or a desire for patronage, not an acknowledgement of same' (p. 161), while W. B. Coley denies either possibility in his 'Henry Fielding and the Two Walpoles', *PQ*, 45 (1966), pp. 157–78.

¹⁶ J. A. Downie, 'Walpole, "the Poet's Foe"', in *Britain in the Age of Walpole*, ed. by Jeremy Black (London: Macmillan, 1984), pp. 171–188 (p. 178).

179–80). Secondly, faced with the opposition's attack, Walpole and his men chose to be quite brazen in admitting their mercenariness, while the politicians and writers in the self-righteous opposition camp could not. Walpole's writers sought to undermine the opposition propaganda by trumpeting the hypocrisy of opposition writers in accusing them of mercenariness when they were also paid to do so. The simple truth could be no more than that Walpole 'paid only for services rendered or anticipated, and was quick to cut back if and when the opportunity arose' (Downie, p. 187), as in Arnall's case (pp. 179–80). Walpole was keener in discerning where the greatest interest lay, if not the greatest literary talent, and more efficient in exploiting whichever pen was serviceable for his purpose, but just as quick as his opponents in 'cutting back'.

As we have briefly remarked of Swift's relation to Harley or Bolingbroke, 'authors', of whatever esteem, stood in a problematic relation to their political 'patrons', whether in the opposition or in the ministerial press. To take another example out of the celebrated *Craftsman*, it is revealing to find Nicholas Amhurst putting himself at the end of the list of the imagined contributors as follows:

I have been set forth to the World as a *noble Lord*, a *discontented Courtier*, an *Ecclesiastical Dignitary*, a *learned Physician*, a *celebrated Poet*, an *expell'd Academick*, and a *Grubstreet Garreteer*. (25 November 1727)

As identified by Goldgar, these mean 'Bolingbroke, Pulteney, Swift, Arbuthnot, Pope, and Amhurst' respectively (p. 43).¹⁷ The distance between Amhurst as 'Craftsman' and Swift as 'Examiner' notwithstanding, Amhurst was executive editor-author of *the* opposition journal, and this particular passage tells much about the relation of this author to his patrons and the Scriblerians. First of all, it is most probable that he was raising the status of the journal by associating it with those distinguished names, in the same way as a dedicator raises the status and price of his work by the 'name' of the dedicatee, as facetiously argued in Fielding's preface to the

¹⁷ It is not clear who is meant by the 'expell'd Academick' in Amhurst's article.

'Dedication to the Public' of *The Historical Register*. Amhurst possibly found the 'chance to bask in reflected cultural glory',¹⁸ in placing himself along with those high-flyers in politics and letters. Nevertheless, it seems to me that Amhurst's self-presentation as 'a Grubstreet Garreteer', which is unlikely to be an expression of modesty, reveals his wry awareness of the great distance between them and himself, a mere 'author' or 'Grubstreet Garreteer' writing in fact for 'bread' under the renowned name of the 'Craftsman'. As befitted this awareness, Amhurst met a characteristic 'Grubstreet' fate, which was particularly remembered by Ralph in *The Case of Authors*:

Poor *Amhurst*! After having been the Drudge of his Party for the best Part of twenty Years together, was as much forgot in the famous Compromise of 1742, as if he had never been born!—And when he died of what is called a broken Heart, which happened within a few Months afterwards, became indebted to the Charity of his very Bookseller for a Grave.—A Grave not to be traced now, because then no otherwise to be distinguished, than by the Freshness of the Turf, borrowed from the next Common to cover it. (p. 32)¹⁹

James Ralph, who was himself another 'Garreteer' and 'archetypal "dunce"',²⁰ referred to the 'three Provinces' for professional authors thus: 'To write for Booksellers. To write for the Stage. To write for a Faction in the Name of the Community' (*Case*, p. 19). In all three 'Provinces', the 'Writer by Profession' (p. 7), distinct from a 'half Squire, half Author' (p. 13) or a 'Volunteer or Gentleman Author' (p. 6), stood in subservient relations to the booksellers, theatrical managers, and political patrons respectively (pp. 20–32). In the expanding market of journalism

¹⁸ Pat Rogers, 'Book Dedications in Britain 1700–1799: A Preliminary Survey', *British Journal for Eighteenth Century Studies*, 16 (1993), 213–33 (p. 229).

¹⁹ Hanson refers to this passage in Ralph's *Case* (p. 70), and also gives an account of the unregarding conducts of the patrons of *The Craftsman*, when the issue of 2 July 1737 (with Fielding's contribution) led to the arrest of the editor Amhurst and the printer Henry Haines (pp. 69–70).

²⁰ Of James Ralph, Pope annotates that 'this low writer constantly attended his own works with Panegyrics in the Journals, and once in particular prais'd himself highly above Mr. Addison, in wretched remarks upon that Author's Account of English Poets, printed in a *London Journal*, Sept. 1728. He was wholly illiterate, and knew no Language not even *French*: Being advised to read the Rules of Dramatick Poetry before he began a Play, he smiled and reply'd, *Shakespear writ without Rules*. He ended at last in the common Sink of all such writers, a Political News-paper, to which he was recommended by his Friend Arnauld, and receiv'd a small pittance for pay' (*The Dunciad Variorum* III. 159n).

in particular, the 'need for substantial financial backing and the intervention of the booksellers and politicians pushed the "author", in whatever capacity, into a clearly subordinate position' (p. 57). 'Whatever the glamour of their political or literary associations', Harris rightly concludes, the status of the journalistic authors was 'peculiarly low' (p. 56), and so were their wages. It was this particular 'fame/shame' that accompanied these authors through the phenomenal expansion of both literary and political journalism in the early-eighteenth century, and in 1739 Fielding registered in their list his 'name' as 'Hercules Vinegar, Champion from Hockley the Hole'.

2. 'But why Champion and *Vinegar*, and Stuff?'

It is generally accepted that Fielding was responsible for the choice of the editorial persona of *The Champion*. The 'Champion', named 'Captain Hercules Vinegar', a retired prize-fighter and cudgel player from Hockley in the Hole, was his unlikely choice.²¹ As we will see in detail later on, Fielding's 'Champion' was modelled on a real-life 'prize-ring "champion" of considerable notoriety at least in and about the year 1731', known by the same pseudonym. This real-life 'champion', Wells explains, 'had formerly been a sort of director of great efficiency at His Majesty's Bear-Garden' at Hockley in the Hole, a place with 'a very unsavoury reputation' (Wells, p. 169). If the 'Champion' is not exactly his creation, Fielding's fascination with this zany character, with distinct theatrical or rather 'farcical' associations (Wells, p. 172), appears characteristic of him, especially in conjunction with his self-awareness as author (of a farce), nurtured, as we have seen, in the theatre. Considering the 'peculiarly low' reputation of a journalist as explained in the preceding section, it is revealing that Fielding develops his first journalistic Author

²¹ See Battestin, *Life*, p. 257, John Edwin Wells, 'Fielding's "Champion" and Captain Hercules Vinegar', *Modern Language Review*, 8 (1913), 165–72 (p. 172), and Simon Varey, *Henry Fielding* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 26. Battestin (p. 277) and Wells (p. 165n) also refer to the opposition's recent defeat of Sir George Champion, Walpole's candidate in the election of Lord Mayor of London in October 1739.

out of the odd 'Champion' or 'Captain' from 'Hockley in the Hole' with its 'very unsavoury reputation'. As preliminaries to the proper analysis of Fielding's characterisation of the 'Champion', the circumstances of his appearance in 1739 as such require our first attention.

His career in the theatre brought to an end by the Licensing Act in June 1737, Fielding had to find other means of maintenance. Considering the collaborative relation between the theatre and the press at the time, especially in the opposition camp, and Fielding's occasional contributions to *The Craftsman* and other opposition journals preceding the Licensing Act,²² it is no wonder that Fielding was then all too ready to plunge into a journalistic career with greater seriousness. As Battestin remarks, Fielding started to contribute 'more frequently, and more vigorously, to *The Craftsman*' and several other papers, and 'the accelerated pace of this journalism suggests that he was turning hackney author now in earnest' (*Life*, p. 235). Of the three means of livelihood for hungry authors, stated by James Ralph, Fielding turned to the third, that is, (partisan) journalism, all but immediately after the second, play-writing, failed him. The prospect of anything like the chief editorship of *The Champion* was simply not in his view until April 1739 or somewhat earlier than that at earliest,²³ though as we shall see soon, even that would not be accompanied by the same degree of glamour as the editorship of *The Tatler* or *The Spectator*.

Along with these journalistic efforts, a new career in the legal profession was in the making as an alternative or additional way of living to authorship. Fielding entered the Middle Temple on 1 November 1737, to be called to the bar on 20 June 1740, when he would be working on *The Champion*. The influence of the Gould family on his mother's side was obvious, but Pat Rogers questions the 'impression' fostered by Fielding's biographers 'that Fielding had half-intended to turn in this

²² See Martin C. Battestin, *New Essays by Henry Fielding: His Contributions to the 'Craftsman' (1734-1739) and Other Early Journalism* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989).

²³ It was Thomas Lockwood who first suggested this earlier date of the planning of *The Champion* than the summer or early autumn of 1739, which had been generally accepted as the genetic period of the journal: 'Fielding's *Champion* in the Planning Stage', *PQ*, 59 (1980), 238-41. Battestin agrees upon the earlier arrangements (*Life*, pp. 258-59).

direction all along' even before the abortion of his theatrical career. Rogers argues that 'Fielding had spent much of his first thirty years repudiating that inheritance' from the Gould family. In fact, Rogers's supposition as to the other 'half of [Fielding's] nature', that is, the 'reckless instincts, derived from his paternal ancestry, that welled up perpetually in his blood' and would resist the 'all-too-predictable way of life' as 'Counsellor Fielding', sounds to me no more illuminating than the 'impression' he opposes. But the possibility is worth considering that 'if he had been able to get some form of subsidy to run an Opposition newspaper, he would probably have preferred that'.²⁴ Whatever the presumed conflict between 'the call to the law and the call to literature' in Cross's words,²⁵ or between 'a Career and a Calling' in Rogers's (the title of his chapter on this period), it seems that the legal career had at least one thing in common with the literary career in that 'the lower rungs of the profession were neither dignified nor remunerative' (Rogers, p. 101). In 1739, having lived 'for over two years without income' and still waiting for the prospect of whatever remuneration as a barrister to materialise, Fielding was driven by financial exigencies as well as what he would later call the 'Itch of Writing' (*The Covent-Garden Journal*, No. 40, p. 230) to accept 'with alacrity the proposal of a syndicate of booksellers that he contribute time and talent in return for "two-sixteenth shares" of the potential profits of *The Champion*' (Cleary, pp. 117–18).

Cross claims that Fielding divulged his design to establish a new paper in the dedication of *The Historical Register* (May 1737), and also in his contribution to *Common Sense*, No. 16 (21 May 1737), even before the passing of the Licensing Act (I, 238). Indeed the note to the 'Author of *Common Sense*', introducing the letter from 'Pasquin' to the 'Author of the *Gazetteer* of May 7', has it that 'as I have yet no Vehicle of my own, I shall be obliged to you if you will give the following a Place in the next Stage' (Battestin, *New Essays*, p. 536). However, this statement is hardly a self-sufficient proof of Fielding's intention, still less his ability, to set up a new paper.

²⁴ Pat Rogers, *Henry Fielding: A Biography* (London: Paul Elek, 1979), pp. 97–98.

²⁵ Wilbur L. Cross, *The History of Henry Fielding*, 3 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1918), I, 242.

Granting that Fielding, as Rogers suggests, would have welcomed a journalistic career on a more stable basis than the piecemeal contributions he was making to several 'vehicles' at the time, it is almost out of the question that Fielding would have been able to found a new paper without financial backing either from his patrons or from some booksellers. For several reasons, no such proposal came Fielding's way in 1737. What Cross suggests as the reasons for Fielding's giving up the said design had better be taken as those for his being left without any offer of subsidy. 'There were', says Cross, 'already half a dozen anti-ministerial newspapers in London, the best of which—"Common Sense"—had been running only a few months, and they were all being watched closely by a Government determined to enforce the laws against libel' (I, 238). Besides, the enlistment of the author of *The Historical Register* and *Eurydice Hissed* in any editorial board 'at a time of fear and trembling' like this (Cross, I, 238) could have been a risky choice at best. In truth, of his contributions to *The Craftsman* through the latter half of 1737, the one for 2 July 'so infuriated the ministry that it took steps to suppress the journal and to punish everyone connected with it from the editor Amhurst down to the printer's devil' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 235).²⁶

By late 1739, though, things had turned out to the advantage of the anti-ministerial press, with the national clamour against Spain growing louder and Walpole finally giving way to it. War was declared in October 1739, and London booksellers, aware that 'newspapers thrive on war' (Cross, I, 250), were stirred to take 'a risk backing a new journal in a crowded market' (Cleary, p. 118). The first issue of *The Champion* came out on 15 November, 'little more than three weeks later, absolutely the minimum time required to set up a high-quality journal' (Cleary, p. 119). Even if the original plan of *The Champion* dates from as early as April 1739 or even somewhat earlier, as Lockwood and Battestin argue, the timing of publication seems purposeful or highly opportune if coincidental.

Despite its timely launching and the booksellers' manoeuvres to attract a readership, *The Champion* did not fare well enough during the first several months. It

²⁶ See Hanson, pp. 69–70, for a detailed account of this prosecution.

sold at three half-pence a copy, 'a price cheaper by a halfpenny than most comparable papers, and one half what Fielding would later charge for *The True Patriot* and the *Covent-Garden Journal*' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 261).²⁷ The earlier two-page format as a morning paper, which would shift to the four-page format as an evening paper in April 1740, allowed little room for advertisements, though if otherwise very few would have been 'prepared to spend three shillings (the price of an advertisement) for the privilege of displaying their wares where they would scarcely be seen' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 261). 'With little or no revenue from advertisers and a price below what its competitors asked', the booksellers behind *The Champion* struggled to secure a minimum readership by distributing the first number gratis and also by advertising each number during the first fortnight in *The London Daily Post* and *The London Evening Post* (Battestin, *Life*, p. 654n). These efforts notwithstanding, '*The Champion* nearly sank without a trace' (p. 261), barely struggling through the winter of 1739–40.

It is not agreed whether or not *The Champion* was subscribed by Fielding's patrons, and if it was, when and by whom of them. All the difficult circumstances during the first months seem to indicate that it was, at least at this stage, a paper organised and managed purely by the booksellers. *The Champion* did include politics in its diet, serving the same Patriot cause as *Common Sense* and *The Craftsman*. But this does not necessarily mean that it was subsidised, for there were always 'commercial pressures' for 'papers to adopt a marked political stance for reasons of personal conviction or marketing strategy' (Black, p. 149). Politics was to no inconsiderable extent a 'financial speculation' in the periodical press (Harris, 'Periodicals', p. 72) as well as in the theatre. The timely inauguration of the new journal, as described above, is surely part of the evidence attesting that the booksellers would certainly capitalise on the saleability of politics at this particular juncture. Furthermore, there is 'no evidence that Fielding and Ralph were actually in

²⁷ It is worth noting that a similar gambit of price reduction was used by the unpatented theatres at Goodman's Fields and the Haymarket in their disadvantaged competition with the patent theatres (Hume, p. 54).

Lyttelton's pay' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 278) or any other politician's then. *The Champion* changed its format and organisation in April 1740, 'heralding the new policy of the journal [...] toward a greater emphasis on Patriot polemics' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 263). Battestin suspects that behind this shift was George Bubb Dodington, who entered the opposition in 1739, after fifteen years' service as a Commissioner of the Treasury and to whom Fielding would dedicate his poem 'Of True Greatness' in January 1740/1 (pp. 278–80). For Cleary, however, the change signals the management's desire 'to sell and attract patronage' by 'making enough noise' (p. 120), not a confirmed subsidy. Cleary affirms that '*The Champion* was not subsidised before June 1740' (p. 120), when *The Gazetteer*, after ignoring it for seven months, suddenly opened fire at *The Champion*, reacting to *Common Sense* and *The Craftsman* in fewer and fewer issues. According to Cleary, this indicates the junior journal's 'sudden rise in its circulation and impact [...] as the result of its obtaining a subsidy in mid-run, surely from Lyttelton or those close to him' (p. 122).

It is not the primary concern of the present discussion to clarify whether the 'politicizing' of *The Champion* in April 1740 was the cause or the result of a subsidy, that is to say, whether it was due to the discretion of the booksellers or the instructions of the politicians. What matters here is that like other journals, *The Champion* was organised and run in accordance with commercial and political exigencies, to which Fielding as chief editor and two-sixteenth share-holder had to acquiesce, however reluctantly, on account of his 'worsening financial circumstances and his anxiety over what appeared to be the imminent demise of the journal' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 282). Besides, Fielding was the last person to be blind to the lucrative potential of politics, after his experiences in the theatre, especially in the last two seasons at the Haymarket. The parallels between his journalistic and theatrical career are not coincidental. His self-nomination as 'Champion' and assumption of absolute authority from the very first number notwithstanding, Fielding was directed by the demands of the public, now in the form of the periodical readership, as he had been subject to the dispositions of the theatre audience even at the 'pinnacle' of his

theatrical career. Fielding was 'drawn into political satire by the need to meet a popular taste for antiministerial ridicule' (Goldgar, p. 207) in the *Champion* essays as well as in the plays, despite his reluctance professed on several occasions in *The Champion*. The conflicting aspects of Fielding's posture in *The Champion* are best reflected in his conception and characterisation of its Author, namely, 'Captain Hercules Vinegar', who bears a fundamental resemblance to the theatrical Authors as we have seen in the preceding chapter. The '(mock-)Herculean' heroism is undermined from within by his origination from Hockley in the Hole, the toponym for bear-baiting and prize-fighting, even baser entertainments than 'pantomimical farces'. Thus the Hockleyan championship with 'a very unsavoury reputation' lends an exaggeratedly self-demeaning metaphor for journalism with its own scandalous reputation. Little wonder that the anti-Walpole satire in *The Champion* employs the same formula as in the plays of 1736–37, in the sense that the disqualification of the 'Champion' from authority for his 'lowly' origin makes him stand for Walpole as well as Fielding. The rest of the present section will be an analysis of the self-contradictory 'Champion', with his 'lowly' and 'farcical' associations at variance with his claims to absolute authority, and the anti-Walpole dimension of *The Champion* will be discussed in the following section.

As mentioned earlier, Fielding modelled his 'Champion' upon a real-life prize-fighter by the same name 'Captain Hercules Vinegar', as the first number of *The Champion* (15 November 1739) establishes at the start: 'It is sufficiently known that some Years since, to the great Terror of the small Vulgar, I entered upon the Title of *Captain*'.²⁸ To understand Fielding's fascination with 'Captain Hercules Vinegar', it will be useful to begin with the contemporary reputation by which the real-life prize-fighter was known to Fielding. Wells has quarried contemporary notices of the real

²⁸ References to *The Champion* are to the original issues extant at the Bodleian Library. The Bodleian collection is not complete, though, starting from No. 20 (29 December 1739) and further omitting Nos. 25 (10 January 1739/40) and 39 (12 February 1739/40). Those missing numbers are found in the first volume of the collected edition of *The Champion: Containing a Series of Papers, Humourous, Moral, Political, and Critical*, 2 vols (London, 1741; 2nd edn, 1743), I: 15 November 1739–13 March 1740; II: 15 March–19 June 1740. References to this edition are accompanied by page numbers as well as dates. The present quotation is from p. 1.

'Captain', mainly newspaper advertisements for his performances, the specimens of which are as follows:

Capt. Vinegar will entertain the Company with his usual Diversion of Cudgel-playing. (*The Daily Post*, 27–31 March 1731)

There will also be good diversion of Cudgel-playing, &c. Captain Vinegar being just crept out of his Bottle, where he has been stopt up all Winter, and looking plaguy Sower and Motherly. (*The Daily Journal*, 30 March 1731)

And for the Diversion of the Spectators, [...] Capt. Vinegar will present them with a new Tragi-comi-pastoral Farce of one Act, call'd, Flesh no Fence against a Flail; or The Art of beating Linnen on the Skin: Wherein several Loggerheads will go near to be broken, and the Best come off with dry Blows. (*The Daily Post*, 24 May 1731)²⁹

It appears from the advertisements collected by Wells that the performances of 'Captain Vinegar and his Company' were usually staged before the main battles of the day, and it is important that he was basically a performer as well as a prize-fighter. The latter may have had much of the former by nature, but it is in the narrower sense of the word that Captain Vinegar was essentially a stage performer. Besides, such references as 'Capt. Vinegar, and his Forces', 'Capt. Vinegar and his Company', 'Captain Vinegar's Company' (Wells, p. 171) attest that he had his own 'Company' or troop of cudgel-players or the like. As suggested by the third of the above advertisements, he was a kind of director or indeed 'author' of his own version of 'Farce' performed by his 'Company'. Wells rightly argues that Fielding gave his first periodical 'at the outset a farcical colour of which he himself a number of times reminded his readers' (p. 172). I would add that Fielding's interest in 'Captain Vinegar' may well have owed much to his recognition of him as another 'author', specialising in a lowborn form of entertainment, probably of his own invention, in the plebeian quarter of Hockley in the Hole, just as John Rich was specialist in pantomime.

²⁹ See Wells, pp. 170–01.

As it happened, the title and pseudonym of 'Captain Hercules Vinegar' provided for Fielding a ready combination of a variety of attributes he was apt to associate with authorship. As for the title 'captain', first of all, Wells explains that 'often the prize-fighter and also the official now styled "referee", were in the eighteenth century styled "Captain" or "The Captain"' (p. 169). As manifested in No. 1, the present Captain derives his title from this corrupt usage, a result of what he calls 'Word-Squandering' in No. 28 of *The Champion* (17 January 1739/40), in which he actually includes his own among other titular words that have lost their proper meaning through the 'Word-Squandering'. Hence the 'great Variety of [...] the Militia Captain, the Dapper Captain, the Darby Captain, the Fighting Captain', as remarked by 'Job Vinegar' in No. 139 (2 October 1740), the last instalment of *The Voyages of Mr. Job Vinegar*.³⁰ An ancestor of Hercules Vinegar, Job Vinegar is said to have been at once 'captain' of a crew, and significantly enough, 'author' of the *Voyages*, which is as a whole an account of the 'Habits and Customs' of the 'Ptfghsiumski' or the 'Inconstants', written after the manner of the 'facetious Capt. *Gulliver*' (20 March 1739/40). Fielding's interest in such 'captain'-figures appears far from incidental. For example, *Jonathan Wild*, probably written around this period, though not published until 1743,³¹ is a mock-biography of one of the most notorious 'captains' of the age, not to mention the numerous roguish 'captains' in Mrs. Heartfree's adventures. After all, Fielding's last hero is Captain Booth in *Amelia*, where he is actually mistaken for a highwayman, owing to his title 'captain', by the governor of Newgate (II. 9).³² In

³⁰ It was three months after the first 'Extracts' (20 March 1739/40) that *The Champion* began to serialise *The Voyages of Mr. Job Vinegar* (28 June–2 October 1740). My references to the *Voyages* series are to the original issues, but there is a convenient collection of this series alone: *Henry Fielding: The Voyages of Mr. Job Vinegar from The Champion (1740)*, ed. by S. J. Sackett, The Augustan Reprint Society Publications, Nos. 67–72 (New York: Kraus Reprint Corporation, 1967).

³¹ I agree with Battestin that 'Fielding conceived [*Jonathan Wild*] and originally drafted it sometime during the period after the Licensing Act of 1737 and before Walpole fell from power in February 1741/2', most probably during the period 'when Fielding was actively involved in *The Champion*' (*Life*, p. 281), which is the reason for my discussing *Jonathan Wild* in the same chapter with *The Champion*.

³² It is often said that Fielding modelled Captain Booth on his father Edmund Fielding: Brian McCrea, *Henry Fielding and the Politics of Mid-Eighteenth-Century England* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1981), p. 48. Edmund Fielding died a Lieutenant General in June 1741, 'in disgrace and penniless' in the aftermath of a series of financial disasters in his last years, after a spendthrift life as a whole (Battestin, *Life*, p. 297). Considering Edmund's successful career in the army accompanied with

The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon, the captain of the ship that conveys Fielding to Lisbon occasions the following observation upon the title 'captain'

—a word of such various use and uncertain signification, that it seems very difficult to fix any positive idea to it: if indeed there be any general meaning which may comprehend all its different uses, that of the head, or chief, of any body of men, seems, to be most capable of this comprehension; for whether they be a company of soldiers, a crew of sailors, or a gang of rogues, he who is at the head of them is always stiled the captain.³³

Tentatively defined as 'the head or chief of any body of men', the title 'captain' epitomises Fielding's concern with the question of authority, while his deliberate levelling of 'a company of soldiers, a crew of sailors, or a gang of rogues' calls for a critical consideration of the nature of authority. In the context of *The Champion*, and *Jonathan Wild*, too, this is certainly the pivotal issue to be raised against the authority of Walpole in particular, which I will discuss in the following section.

At a more fundamental level, though, there is the primal association between authorship and soldiership,³⁴ according to the idea that a satirist should undertake a moral campaign of war, to which Fielding must have been accustomed by his humanist education. In truth, this constitutes an important part of his ideal notion of 'a great and good Writer', given expression in the following manner:

what the Ministry are to the State, the Bishops to the Church, the Chancellors and Judges to the Law, the Generals to the Army, and the Admirals to the Fleet; that is a great and good Writer over the Morals of his Countrymen.

(Letter XL, in *Familiar Letters*, II, p. 298)

'considerable emoluments', McCrea's assumption about 'Fielding's sympathy for his father's plight as a half-pay officer' (p. 48) is hardly justifiable. More relevant is Battestin's well-documented demonstration of Fielding's grievances over his father's dissipation of what should have been considerable expectations.

³³ *The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* (London, 1755), p. 61. Further references are to this edition and given after quotations in the text.

³⁴ Another explanation could be that the (pseudo-)military character was taken up to capitalise on the national cry for war and to poke fun at Walpole's unpopular peace policy.

In *The Champion*, Fielding creates the first Author who exchanges the 'Sword' for the 'Pen', so that his primary attribute derives from his fictional background as a retired 'captain', if from the prize-ring, rather than the battlefield. Indeed No. 6 (27 November 1739) elaborates on the analogy between 'the Soldier and the Author', but not quite in the humanist tradition.

There are two Sorts of Persons, who, may, in some Sense, be said to feed on the Breath which goeth out of the Mouth of Man; namely, the Soldier and the Author. But here I would not be understood to mean, by Soldier, such wise Military Men, who justly despising this thin Diet, are content to receive from five hundred to two thousand Pounds a Year, for appearing now and then in a red Coat with a Sash, in the Parks and Market-Places of this Kingdom, and who never saw an Enemy, unless the old Officers and Soldiers of their own Regiments, who disdain to have such Commanders at their Head; nor, by Authors, would I be supposed to cast any Reflection on such as have found a Method by Panegyric, to cram themselves with more substantial Food. The Kind of Persons here hinted at, may be seen in St. *James's* Park in a foggy Morning in shabby red and black Coats, with open Mouths eagerly devouring the Fog for Breakfast. Such Soldiers as an Acquaintance of mine, who, after he had served many Campaigns in *Flanders*, and been wounded in *Spain*, with a generous Heart and an empty Pocket died in the *King's Bench*; and such Authors as *Butler*, who, after he had published his inimitable *Hudibras*, was starved to Death in a Garret.

Now what did these obtain, or what can their Followers promise themselves besides Fame, which is but the Breath of Man? (pp. 32–33)

It is a 'thin Diet' in life and death with 'an empty Pocket' and an empty stomach that befall 'the Soldier and the Author' in common. Now their 'Campaigns' seem to have lost the former glory and become drudgery whether in the garret or in the field. It is the same world as we have seen inhabited by the hungry authors in *The Author's Farce* and as we will see lodging a half-pay officer like Captain Booth on the brink of a similar termination to a death 'in the King's Bench' in *Amelia*.³⁵

In a similar context, Hercules' 'Club' is the emblem of his mythical mightiness, which the satirist's pen seeks to imitate upon the corrupt and vicious. The task of 'a great and good Writer' is Herculean, in the same sense that Dr. Harrison in *Amelia*

³⁵ In my opinion, Booth's status as a half-pay officer reflects Fielding's sense of unrequitedness for his authorial combating in behalf of his patrons, in *The True Patriot* and *The Jacobite's Journal* in particular, and for that matter, through all his writings that he believed espoused their cause. I will return to this issue in my discussion of Fielding's ministerial writing in *The True Patriot* and *The Jacobite's Journal* in Chapter IV, Section 1.

evokes Hercules' mythic task of purging the Augean stables.³⁶ Like the soldier-author, though, the Herculean Author of *The Champion*, too, appears in a 'shabby' coat, for the Hercules of *The Champion* is a 'tickling', merry-andrew kind of mock-Hercules,³⁷ who used to make a livelihood from his club or cudgel in the popular prize-ring and now exchanges it for the pen to vie in the periodical market. Indeed one 'Philalethes' says in his letter to Vinegar that 'to set up a Paper' to correct the 'Taste and Manners of the People' is an 'Office too great for any one Man to execute, and which hath formerly employed the best Heads in the Nation, such as *Addison*, *Steele*, and many others' (10 January 1739/40, pp. 174–75). It is a Herculean task, just like the purgation of the Augean stables, and 'how ridiculous must it seem then,' adds Philalethes, 'to see a Fellow of a low Capacity, and a mean Behaviour, investing himself with this Office, placing his Family over all the Professions, and shaking a Club at the whole Nation.' Hercules Vinegar's 'Club' is an object of contempt and ridicule, the shaking of which will hardly 'terrify' any reader into good manners (p. 175).

In addition, 'Hercules' is the last word to be considered innocuous by Fielding's contemporaries, especially when it appears in the anti-Walpole press. In a number of opposition prints, Walpole was ironically depicted as the 'new Hercules' in ascendancy over the Opposition Hydra, and the popularity of this design was confirmed, when it was taken as the sixth state of the Robinocracy in the frontispiece to the collected edition of *The Craftsman* of 1731.³⁸ By no coincidence, *The Champion* would appear with the same design on its title page, featuring Hercules slaying the Hydra with his club. No wonder that Hercules Vinegar still has Walpole as 'another Hercules' in No. 76 (8 May 1740), nor that Fielding and Walpole meet in the modern Hercules, just as they did in Pillage in *Eurydice Hissed*.

³⁶ *Amelia*, ed. by Martin C. Battestin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), XI. 2, p. 465. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

³⁷ I will discuss similar mock-Herculean qualities in both Parson Adams and Joseph Andrews in Chapter III, Section 3.

³⁸ See Paul Langford, *Walpole and the Robinocracy*, The English Satirical Print 1660-1832 Series (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1986), Plates 12–14.

The burlesque element inherent in the modern Hercules is complemented by his surname 'Vinegar'. Simon Varey remarks that 'Captain Hercules Vinegar [is] a name combining strength and acerbic wit' (p. 26). Indeed Captain Vinegar shows 'acerbic wit', but Varey's view only represents the simplest understanding of the Author of *The Champion*. In my view, the bathos of the word 'Vinegar' with its literally acerbic taste counts before the 'acerbic wit' in its odd coupling with 'Hercules', admitting the futility of exercising wit towards the uncomprehending audience. Thus Vinegar himself makes a joke of his surname in No. 58 (27 March 1740): 'Whatever *sour* Ideas may be annexed to the Name of *Vinegar*, no Family hath been more remarked for *Sweetness* of Temper than ours' (italics added). In No. 77 (10 May 1740), too, Vinegar receives a letter from his kinswoman 'Joan Crabverjuice', beginning as follows:

Loving Kinsman.

Chance having brought some of your Works to my View, I was agreeably surprized to find *Vinegar* so nearly allyed to *Verjuice*; at first I disdain'd claiming you as a Relation, being a true *English Assid* myself, you of Foreign Extraction; had you been *Ale-egar*, I should not one Moment have deferred addressing my Beloved Cousin.

This letter, like Vinegar's own joke in No. 58, makes fun of the literal acerbity of vinegar, an 'Assid [...] of Foreign Extraction', though very 'nearly allyed to *Verjuice*'. Mrs. Crabverjuice would have liked him better, had he been 'Ale-egar', not 'Vinegar', which underlines his French connection to *vin*. As cited earlier, the advertisement of the real-life Vinegar in *The Daily Journal* (30 Mar 1731) runs thus: 'Captain Vinegar being just crept out of his Bottle, where he has been stopt up all Winter, and looking plaguy Sower and Mothery'. Without much difficulty, the 'Bottle' here can be related to that of liquor. We are told by his wife Joan that it is Vinegar's custom to cool himself, when agitated, 'with a huge Dram of Brandy' (9 February 1739/40). Vinegar's love of liquor aligns him with a number of other Fieldingesque characters, positive or negative, but most closely with his immediate

predecessor, Pillage, whose drunkenness in the last scene of *Eurydice Hissed* renders a most powerful picture of the damned Author.

To go back to Crabverjuice's letter, Vinegar implies that judging from its orthography, it may have come from the 'Author of the *Apol.* himself' (10 May 1740). It is well known that Colley Cibber was once again made the talk of the town by the publication of his *Apology* on 7 April 1740, a decade after his appointment to poet-laureateship in 1730, and naturally the *Champion* would make a good fun of this 'Prince of Folly', as 'no wit in Cibber's London could do otherwise' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 275). Moreover, the *Champion* had a personal reason to react to Cibber, having found in the *Apology* a flouting account of the 'Herculean Satyrist', 'Drawcansir in Wit'.³⁹ The Crabverjuice episode is one of his reactions to Cibber, getting as usual at his notorious ill-command of English. In almost every issue in April and May 1740, the *Champion* dwells upon what he dubs the 'CIBBERIAN STILE' in No. 74 (3 May), and the whole leader of No. 72 (29 April) ransacks the *Apology* page by page for illustrations 'to show the little Advantage of Learning, or Grammar, to an Author'. In an earlier number (25 December 1739), however, Vinegar has publicly admitted himself to be one of such 'great' authors as despise learning, especially 'those dead Tongues' (p. 125). Likewise, Mrs. Crabverjuice's claim to her kinship with Vinegar implies the kinship between Vinegar/Fielding and Crabverjuice/Cibber. Ironic retaliation on Cibber aside, 'Vinegar' conjures up the unsavoury vulgarity of a bad author (like Cibber), instead of the 'acerbic wit' of a racy satirist, which is also relevant to Fielding's demeaning version of himself as author, in wry accordance with his enemies'. Pretensions to classical learning will only earn more ridicule for an author engaged in the Grubbean profession of journalism. Even if it is true that Fielding always considers classical learning as the criterion of superiority, what is the use, after all, when it is not communicable to the reader? Anxiously aware that 'without an intelligent readership to address, satire loses any persuasive claim to

³⁹ See Battestin, *Life*, p. 275, and Cleary, p. 126.

moral authority',⁴⁰ Fielding burlesques Hercules with Vinegar, boosting the 'farcical colour' inherent in the modern Hercules of Hockley in the Hole.

'Captain Hercules Vinegar' combines the whole variety of associations germane to Fielding's problematic idea of authorship, from the ideal standing of 'a great and good Writer' as an authority 'over the Morals of his Countrymen', to the bathetic reality of a lowborn prize-fighter-like author. The significance of everything he represents would remain valid for Fielding's entire career, and yet Fielding had a good reason to find a particular affinity between himself and the Captain at this juncture, with the demise of the 'Great Mogul' still in fresh memory. First of all, the activities of the real-life Captain Vinegar were of an essentially theatrical or 'farcical' cast, as mentioned earlier. He was also 'captain' of his company, as Fielding or the Great Mogul was recently a sort of 'captain' of his company at the Haymarket. Recently forced out of the theatre for his campaigns against Walpole, Fielding had reason to look upon himself as a veteran with scars. Moreover, he felt unrequited for them, which cost him his livelihood, and left to a fate, like the soldier's in No. 6 of *The Champion*, to die with 'an empty Pocket [...] in the King's Bench', or indeed like the author Butler's, to 'starve to Death in a Garret' (pp. 32–33).⁴¹ The retired Captain could suit the picture Fielding had of himself at the moment, for reasons much less inspiring than his presumed combination of 'strength and acerbic wit'.

With the less awe-inspiring attributes of the Captain in mind, we need to re-read his self-introduction in the very first number:

It is sufficiently known that some Years since, to the great Terror of the small Vulgar, I entered upon the Title of *Captain*; this I did without the Consent of any one Person living, or without any other Commission or Authority than what I immediately derived from myself. I have now determin'd to lay aside the Sword, which, without Vanity, I may boast to have us'd with some Success, (though few Captains now living, can say the like) and take up the Pen in its Stead, with a Design to do as much Execution with the one, as I

⁴⁰ Ian A. Bell, *Henry Fielding: Authorship and Authority* (London: Longman, 1994), p. 161.

⁴¹ In his annotation to Fielding's 'Epitaph on Butler's Monument', Miller observes that 'eighteenth-century writers carefully nurtured the legend that Samuel Butler [...] had expired in poverty and neglect' (*Miscellanies; Volume One*, p. 66n).

have already done with the other; or, in other Words, to tickle now, as I before bruised Men into good Manners. (15 November 1739, p. 1)

Significantly enough, the inaugural speech of this 'Captain'-turned Author brings into focus the issue of 'Authority'. Such is his 'great Terror' that the Captain begs no 'Consent of any one Person living' nor 'any other Commission or Authority' than his own, either in assuming the 'Title of Captain' or in undertaking this new task with the 'Pen'. Not to mention the 'ticklingly' facetious manner of his address, the discrepancy between such proclamation of self-importance and absolute authority and the questionable credentials the Captain himself presents seems to have aroused immediate response from the public. It appears from No. 2 (17 November) that his association with Hockley in the Hole in particular has invited much complaint, so that the Captain explains himself that 'as for myself, I am so far from desiring to derive any Honour from my Ancestors, that I have retired to so obscure a Place as *Hockley in the Hole*, where my humble Habitation often reminds me that *Hercules* himself was no more than a Descendant of *Adam*' (p. 11). Indeed, Fielding has one fictitious correspondent named 'Paul Serious' (4 December 1739) express his dislike for the Champion's 'first setting out with a Description of a set of low Characters', that is, the Vinegar crew, and ask 'why Champion and *Vinegar*, and Stuff?' (p. 59). In the same issue, the bookseller's 'Memorial', too, calls attention to the 'universal Objection' to the title and adds that 'some dislike the Word *Champion*, some *Hercules Vinegar*, and some *Hockley in the Hole*' (p. 57), which, presumably, pictures to us the actual situation in 1739. Nevertheless, Vinegar declares that such objection only betrays 'an Inclination to cavil, and is at the same Time so absurd, that it scarce deserves an Answer' (p. 61), apparently in the same spirit as he set out as Champion 'without any other Commission or Authority' than his own. He will follow the example of Horace, who was 'so far from fearing the Censure of the illiterate Rabble, that he esteem'd it laudable not to endeavour to please them, but rather to be content with few Readers' (p. 60). The '*Champion* will have no Reason to court their Favour' (p. 60). The truth is exactly to the contrary, though, for as a periodical author

he has every reason to 'court' the public. Pressures from the public and the proprietary seem to have been too much even for the *Champion*, whose arrival at Pall Mall on 10 December 1739 is announced, with no awkward explanation, in the issue for the following day, just a week after his declaration not to please the public. Still this is just one example revealing his subjection to the public, which is more truthfully recollected in No. 91 (12 June 1740) with regard to 'the greatest Difficulty' facing 'a miscellaneous Author'.⁴² The *Champion* here clearly contradicts his initial claim by assuring that 'all possible Care shall be used to please them all'.

In his characteristic way, the *Champion* often asserts that he is such a 'great Terror' to his family (25 December 1739 and 9 February 1739/40) that when he commands his cudgel, 'that terrible Weapon' (9 February 1739/40), to be unchained from the wall, Joan is 'the only one who dare look him in the Face'. He also claims that the public dread him so much that 'very few People are able to endure' even the sight of his brows knit at them (22 March 1739/40). It is apparently with this kind of unquestionable authority that the *Champion*, in No. 17 (22 December 1739), proclaims his decision to erect a 'Court of Judicature',

wherein I shall sit myself as sole Judge, and before which I shall summon and try at my Pleasure, all Manner of Persons and Things in this Kingdom, assigning to the Parties such Council out of my own Family, as to me appears meet. This Court I shall hold more or less often at my own Will, and as Occasion requires; and shall sentence such as I think guilty, entirely according to my Pleasure, without any Regard had to the Laws now in Being.

(pp. 116–17)

'As for Juries', the *Champion* even adds, 'I have no need of them, as I reserve to myself the full Power of convicting or acquitting as I think just' (p. 118).⁴³ However, Vinegar's 'Court of Judicature' does not meet until about five months later (17 May

⁴² According to Cleary, this number signals 'a rebirth' of *The Champion* as a subsidised paper (pp. 122–23).

⁴³ The judge/author analogy is also integral to Fielding's ideal of 'a great and good Writer', but like the said soldier/author analogy, this is open to self-burlesque in the real context of occurrence. In this regard, even the famous proclamation by the self-appointed 'Founder of a new Province of Writing' in *Tom Jones* that 'I shall not look on myself as accountable to any Court of Critical Jurisdiction whatever' (II. 1, p. 77) requires a less straightforward reading than it usually receives.

1740) and even then adjourns without day after the first sitting. Seeing Fielding's life-long interest and actual engagement in judicature and revivals of the 'Court of Criticism' in *The Jacobite's Journal* and *The Covent-Garden Journal*, it is curious that the Champion's proclamation, made with such panache, virtually came to nothing. We can only suspect that it was probably disapproved by the management on account of the indifferent reception of the idea by the public. Supposing this was the case, we find a significant parallel between Vinegar's all but forced removal from Hockley in the Hole to Pall Mall and the virtual retraction of his court of judicature.

Backgrounds aside, Vinegar's emphatic declaration of his absolute judicial authority is undermined by his own remarks to follow. He unfolds to the public his projects for a new prison, an execution ground, and such like. His plan to convert 'the Stage of *Drury-Lane*' into the 'Scene of all Punishments' (p. 118) especially arrests our attention.

As I have observed the good People of *England* to be great Lovers of all Executions; and as I have often heard it lamented, that there are not proper Conveniencies for our Women of Fashion to be present at these Spectacles, I have appointed the Stage of *Drury-Lane* to be the Scene of all Punishments, which are to be there executed between the second and third Music. This, I think, cannot fail of drawing larger Audiences, than at present frequent our Theatres; and may likewise give the Pit and Galleries such an Opportunity of venting their Spleen and Ill-nature before the Curtain rises, as may enable them to suffer the Players to proceed without any Interruption. (pp. 118–19)

Here the Champion virtually turns a theatrical author-manager, making proposals, well worth another 'Dedication to the Public', to cater to the 'Conveniencies' of his audience, entertain them with 'Spectacles', and draw 'larger Audiences'. Interestingly enough, his exactitude in insisting on the punishments being 'executed between the second and third Music' recalls, for example, Fustian's in persisting that 'the Moment the first Ghost descends, the second is to rise', and that with enough 'Thunder and Light'ning' (*Pasquin*, IV, p. 48). Both Vinegar and Fustian are spectacle-managers. More importantly, the whole passage is a reminder of Medley's avowal that he intends to 'divert the town and bring full houses' (*The Historical Register*, I. 83).

Similar satires are familiar to us from Fielding's plays, tilting at theatrical managers like Cibber and Rich and ill-natured audiences. As we have also seen in the preceding chapter, Fielding tends to infuse his demeaning self-reflection into such satires, revealing his awareness that he is after all a 'servant to the public', too. For Fielding, an author on the stage, manoeuvring to please the audience but to be damned by them, is always the prototype of an author as servant to the public or public caterer, and it is understandable that *The Champion* is haunted by the same figure, especially as we have already observed a couple of significant evidences of the Champion's subjection to the tyranny of the public. It is indeed an uncanny self-reflection for the 'sole Judge' who has just declared his absolute authority over 'all Manner of Persons and Things in this Kingdom'.

Such an author on the stage or 'Master of a Stage' does not essentially differ from a hackney coachman, as the Champion draws the analogy for himself in No. 25 (10 January 1739/40):

I Consider my Paper as a Sort of Stage Coach, a Vehicle in which every one hath a Right to take a Place. If any Letter therefore should hereafter appear in it, which may give Offence to particular Persons, they can have no more Anger to me on that Account, than they would shew to the Master of a Stage, who had brought their Enemy to Town. (p. 173)

The hackney coachman and the 'Master of a Stage' are of a kind in that both of them run 'a Vehicle in which every one hath a Right to take a Place' (for a fee). Whether the vehicle is a stage coach or a stage, it is the paying public who have all the right there is to direct, and particularly to damn, the paid coachman or author. Though the passage ironically pleads against criticism, the Champion is obliged to publish a 'very severe Letter' on himself, which sneers at his 'Manners of *Hockley*', 'low Capacity', 'mean Behaviour', 'extreme Ignorance', and so on (pp. 174–75).

Who are you? What are you? that have set yourself up for a Dictator in this Manner? That you came from *Hockley in the Hole* must be confest, and do you think your creeping nearer the Court will alter the Manners of *Hockley*, into those at *St. James's*; when it is notorious, that none but your old

Hockleyan Acquaintance resort to you, fellows who were never seen in a polite Part of the Town 'till your Arrival there?

It is not, Friend, as you would insinuate in your Advertisement, out of any Spleen or Pique against you that you are opposed [...]. It is from a Contempt of your Parts, from knowing you to be utterly disqualified for the Office you have taken upon you. An Office too great for any one Man to execute, and which hath formerly employed the best Heads in the Nation, such as *Addison*, *Steele*, and many others. How ridiculous must it seem then, to see a Fellow of a low Capacity, and a mean Behaviour, investing himself with this Office, placing his Family over all the Professions, and shaking a Club at the whole Nation. (pp. 174–75)

Having thus rallied against the 'low Capacity', low origin, low behaviour of the Champion from Hockley in the Hole, the fictitious writer of this letter, one 'Philalethes', puts the final question: 'Do you really think the People of *England* have entirely lost their Understanding, or have worked up yourself into a Belief that they will be terrified by the Shaking of your Club?' (p. 176). Likewise, the Champion's essay on 'Virtue naked' (No. 31, 24 January 1739/40) is followed by another abusive letter, contemptuously denying his authority to dwell upon such a subject: 'Who would have expected, or who indeed can bear such pious and moral Declamations from the Mouth of Capt. *Vinegar*?' (No. 32, 26 January 1739/40). Who is afraid of the 'ridiculous and miraculous' club of Hercules any more than the 'Romantick Tub of *Diogenes*'? Through these letters of his own fabrication, Fielding displays more of his 'puzzling exercise in self-ridicule', which Battestin has noticed in *Pillage* (*Life*, p. 221), alongside his despairing view of the unbridgeable gap between the Herculean task of a satirist and the reality of 'a Hackney Writer'.

The leader of No. 91 (12 June 1740) is particularly important for our understanding of Fielding's reflection on the editorship of his first journal. The same number marks the turning point in the evolution of *The Champion*, when according to Cleary 'an increase in circulation' as the result of a new subsidy had just begun to provoke *The Gazetteer* to react to this hitherto ignored journal. In an uncharacteristically placid, even subdued tone, the Champion recollects the hardships he and his paper have come through. The central subject is the 'Difficulty of pleasing

all Palates', to which a 'miscellaneous Author' or indeed 'every Writer' is exposed.⁴⁴

The 'Difficulty' or rather impossibility arises from two reasons:

first, a cursed Spirit of Indignation, rages against every Writer before he hath established a Reputation. Another Obstruction is, the great Difference of Opinion concerning all Works of Wit and Humour.

With no little experience in these matters, the Champion rightly says that 'if he is serious, one half of his Readers cry he is dull; if ludicrous, the other half call him ridiculous, foolish, farcical'. Having revealed his most sombre reflection on the hostile audience,⁴⁵ of which the prototype is again the 'Audience at a Play-House', he still has to space himself from it, to get on as author at all. Thus the Champion assures his readers that 'all possible Care shall be used to please them all', conceding the need for 'a miscellaneous Author' to 'please' the readers. He goes on to create a space where a congenial relationship between author and reader is imaginable, by asking his readers to 'pardon us, tho' they should, now and then, not taste our Essay, as it may be compared to an eleemosynary Bottle given by the Master of the House'. A sea change from his 'Mightiness' the Champion, who would 'have no Reason to court their Favour' (4 December 1739, p. 60). The much domesticated Champion here pictures to himself a private and amicable relationship, not different from that between the Author of *Joseph Andrews* and his 'thousands' of readers, whom he once imagines himself addressing 'in their Closets' (III. 1, p. 189).⁴⁶ Even so, the truth is that *The Champion*, as its Author well knows, is no such 'eleemosynary Bottle given by the Master of the House'. He has given earlier a more truthful picture, in equating his paper with 'a Sort of Stage Coach' or a stage entertainment catered for the public.

⁴⁴ This anticipates the similar remark in *Tom Jones* (I. 1), comparing an author to a 'Master of a public Ordinary', whose customers 'will insist on gratifying their Palates, however nice and whimsical these may prove; and if every Thing is not agreeable to their Taste, will challenge a Right to censure, to abuse, and to d—n their Dinner without Controul' (p. 31).

⁴⁵ For a discussion of Fielding's scepticism of his audience, see Nicholas Hudson, 'Fielding's Hierarchy of Dialogue: Meta-Response and the Reader of *Tom Jones*', *PQ*, 68 (1989), 177–94 (esp. pp. 178–79).

⁴⁶ There is an interesting suggestion by Bell that with 'thousands' Fielding is 'surreptitiously and gleefully anticipating the commercial success of his book' (p. 88).

Likewise, it is truer that the Author of such a vehicle 'ought to consider himself', like the Author of *Tom Jones*, 'not as a Gentleman who gives a private or eleemosynary Treat, but rather as one who keeps a public Ordinary, at which all Persons are welcome for their Money' (I. 1, p. 31).

When he entered by contract upon the editorship of *The Champion*, Fielding must have sufficiently foreseen the shabby reality of a 'miscellaneous Author', incapacitating his wishful ambition to make it a second *Tatler* or *Spectator*. As recollected in No. 91, it arrived in a periodical market already crowded with 'a great many Papers', which duly increased pressure on the newcomer. Early in its run, Fielding dramatised the situation most notably in the form of the bookseller's 'Memorial' (No. 9, 4 December 1739). The bookseller petitions the Author to 'infuse Gall in your Ink, and instead of Morality, Wit, and Humour, deal forth private Slander and Abuse' (p. 58), especially to deal in politics, since complaint has been made that he is 'not bold enough' (p. 57). In fact, the device of the memorial is another instance of Fielding's kind of 'image-laundering' by relegating commercial aspects to booksellers, as in the preface to the dedication of *The Historical Register*. His own point of view, though, could not afford to be very different from the bookseller's, considering his dependence on the editorship for livelihood. Fielding could not simply afford to be indifferent to the circulation figures of his paper any more than to the ticket sales of his plays. In compensation for his subjection to the rationale of the literary market, where an author is obliged to write to the dictation of the customers, Fielding creates a seemingly greater tyrant, a Herculean author, who commands the whole nation with terrifying authority. Pushed to extremes, such an author only becomes a self-burlesque, highlighting the gap between the heroic ideal and the bathetic reality. No wonder that Fielding finds in the Hockleyan Hercules living by the cudgel an embodiment of the inherent discomfiture in a satirist living by the pen. Such is the self-contradiction in Hercules Vinegar that he fits most wonderfully into the other Hercules.

3. Hercules v. Hercules: Walpole in *The Champion*

'At first', says Hercules Vinegar in No. 15 (18 December 1739), 'it was not [...] my Intention to deal much in serious Politics in this Paper' (p. 105). For that matter, *The Champion* did not indeed turn a partisan paper until about April 1740 (Battestin, *Life*, p. 282), and even then, unlike in the case of *The Craftsman* or *Common Sense*, opposition politics rarely exhausted its pages entirely (Cleary, p. 126, and Battestin, *Life*, p. 257). There is no denying that *The Champion* had been offering anti-ministerial material almost from the beginning, but more than once it expressed reluctance during its earlier run. Two issues earlier than the said No. 15, the journal publishes in place of the editorial a letter dated from Inner Temple depicting a dream vision of Parnassus, as an introduction to which the fictitious correspondent compliments *The Champion* on 'not being totally devoted to Politics' (13 December 1739, p. 87). According to Vinegar's initial word, politics is supposed to be tendered by his father 'Nehemiah Vinegar', who says, oddly enough, 'I find I am no Politician' (14 February 1740). Vinegar senior adds that 'whatever was the Original of Politicks, it must certainly be allowed to be a Mystery; i.e. [...] a *Thing conceal'd, a Secret not easy to be apprehended*: [...] I know nothing of the Matter',⁴⁷ concluding the article by asking his 'Correspondents for the Future to look on [*The Champion*] as a miscellaneous, not a merely political Paper'.

Such professed reluctance or naïvety notwithstanding, all of the above remarks are in fact followed or preceded by some of the more openly political items in *The Champion*. The vision of Parnassus in No. 13 is undoubtedly an anti-Walpole slur, packed with specific compliments to opposition, especially Patriot writers and politicians. It openly pays eulogy to Richard Glover the 'excellent Author of *Leonidas*' (the Patriot epic published in 1737) and George Lyttelton the sometime writer now devoted to 'graver Studies' of politics (p. 91), and gibes at pro-Walpole

⁴⁷ There is a similar remark upon the 'Mysteries or Secrets [...] of Prime Ministring' in comparison with those of 'Authoring' in *Joseph Andrews* (II. 1), which will be the subject of Chapter III, Section 4 of the present thesis.

writers, including Colley Cibber, the '*Hyp-Doctor*' John 'Orator' Henley (p. 92), and the *Gazetteers*, not to mention their patron Walpole himself.⁴⁸ Hercules Vinegar's own remark in No. 15 is followed by an anonymous letter 'To the Citizens of London', which ironically affirms that the city of London should withstand bribery.⁴⁹ Likewise, the article by the no-politician Nehemiah Vinegar is a thrust at pro-Walpole papers, including 'a certain Piece of Paper, entitled the *Hyp-Doctor*' and especially the 'excellent political Paper, called the *Gazetteer*', with an innuendo against Walpole as 'Mr. Forage', who Nehemiah says has been trying to bribe him over to his side (14 February 1739/40). In addition to the feigned unwillingness, it is significant that in the fictional context at least, none of these pieces are from the *Champion*'s own pen. In my view, this is another example of Fielding's habit of removing himself from his writings, as pointed out in the preceding chapter, by endlessly signing different names. In the present case, he gives away his authorship, first to Hercules Vinegar the nominal Author of *The Champion*, and yet again to some other author, whether a made-up correspondent or another member of the Vinegar family. By doing so, he alienates himself from his writings, not because he endorses Walpolean politics, but because he is all too conscious that they cater to the 'popular taste for antiministerial ridicule' (Goldgar, p. 207), if not to the prescription of his political patrons at the moment. Having recently felt the cost of catering to that 'taste', Fielding had every reason to be wary as well as weary of political satire.

Whatever his disposition at this juncture, politics was the most wanted 'food' in the press, and if so, the Author or 'master of a public house' called the '*Champion*'

⁴⁸ For an account of Glover and *Leonidas* within the Patriot circle, see Goldgar, pp. 147–49, and Cleary, pp. 87, 181, and 188, for Fielding's puffs of the poem. *The Hyp-Doctor* was one of the pro-Walpole journals, written for 'a salary of £100 p.a.' by John 'Orator' Henley (Downie, 'Walpole, "the Poet's Foe"', pp. 177–78, and Pope, *The Dunciad*, III. 199n). Fielding numbered 'Orator' Henley among the followers of Goddess Nonsense in *The Author's Farce* (III), of which the anti-Walpole overtone is a point of dispute between Goldgar (pp. 103–04) and Sheridan Baker, 'Political Allusion in Fielding's *Author's Farce*, *Mock Doctor*, and *Tumble-Down Dick*', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 77 (1962), 221–31 (p. 225). For short accounts of 'Orator' Henley, see Woods, Appendix B, pp. 104–05, and of course, Pope's note to *The Dunciad Variorum*, III. 195 (p. 414).

⁴⁹ A year later in December 1740, with the critical general election of 1741 approaching, Fielding would publish an election pamphlet to the similar effect, *An Address to the Electors of Great Britain*.

had to provide it for his customers. In No. 9 (4 December 1739), the bookseller insinuates that the principal reason for the journal's low circulation is its want of (political) 'Acid' and suggests some proven recipes.

Your Bookseller farther sheweth, that he hath seen several Persons shake their Heads [...] and to hint that your Mightiness is not bold enough. On which Account he humbly begs Leave to suggest to your Mightiness, that you would take this last Objection into your Consideration, seeing that he can assure you from Experience, that Wit and Humour are too luscious, and will pall the Appetite without a little of the Acid mixt with them. [...] In order to which, he hath order'd his Printer to provide himself with great Quantities of Dashes to keep the first and last Letter of proper Names and other Words asunder, as *R—t M—r*; and a large Fund of *Italian* Character. As for Instance, *He farther begs Leave (as an Encouragement) to represent to you the great Lenity of the Administration, who have never punished any Libels against them, unless by breaking the Press to Pieces, Pillory, Fine, and Imprisonment*; the three last of which he apprehends to be very lawful Methods, and (one of them at least) invented, as he conceives, for the Benefit and Advantage of Booksellers, whose Copies never fail to sell well, when they have been advertized in the Pillory [...]. He therefore humbly begs, that your Mightiness would infuse Gall in your Ink, and instead of Morality, Wit, and Humour, deal forth private Slander and Abuse. (pp. 57–58)

Indeed the typographic gimmicks proposed by this experienced bookseller were commonly used in the contemporary press, and by Fielding, too. Of the three 'very lawful Methods' of advertisement, the bookseller seems particularly interested in the pillory, as it is a warrant of commercial success. He even implies that he is willing to risk following 'the Steps of those glorious Heroes, whose Works have been published in that Manner' (p. 58). According to a later article in *The Covent-Garden Journal* (No. 51, 27 June 1752), however, authors are more liable to the pillory than booksellers, since they have learned to employ their 'Understrappers', that is, their authors for the same result, taking the hint from the case of Richard Savage (in 1727).⁵⁰ Therefore, if by hindsight, it is likely that the passage in question reveals, as well as the length booksellers tend to go to sell their wares, the vulnerable position to

⁵⁰ The same article goes on to expatiate upon the other methods evolved from Savage's case, that is, publishing the author's dying speech at Tyburn, and bringing the author to the whipping post rather than the gallows, because one may be whipped many times but hanged once for all (pp. 283–84). Goldgar suggests that Richard Savage was one of the subscribers to Fielding's *Miscellanies*, and the acquaintance between the two authors was through Fielding's bookseller Andrew Millar (p. 283n).

which authors can be exposed by the booksellers' all but inhuman mercenariness, if not by their own. It is only ironical that the present bookseller keeps 'humbling' himself in addressing the Champion, his Author or 'Understrapper', as 'your Mightiness'.

Though the Champion apparently dismisses the petition with the affirmation that he 'will have no Reason to court their Favour' (p. 60), what really happens is that he begins to add 'Acid' from next issue onwards. The following number (6 December 1739) starts with a seemingly innocuous reflection upon 'Human Life' as 'the Game of Hazard' (p. 64), when politics comes in with the remark that '*Fortune often picks a great Man, in Jest, out of the lowest of the People*' (p. 66). General as it looks, this is a cautious opening of fire at *the* Great Man, for as I shall demonstrate in detail later on, drawing on Walpole's 'lowness' is the basic formula for undermining his authority in *The Champion*. Furthermore, the rest of the same number dwells on Oliver Cromwell the 'usurper' of the crown, who so easily stands for Walpole that it takes little to see through a passage like the following:

Can we think a *Pym*, or a *Hambden* would have tamely submitted to see this Usurper and his shabby Relations and Creatures [...] at the Head of the Parliament (I mean *Barebone's* Parliament, and that in 1656) the Army, and [...] the Estates and Lives of three Kingdoms? (p. 67)

The more or less veiled quip at Walpole in No. 10 soon gives place to a more familiar and easily penetrable thrust at Theophilus Cibber, with an ironic glance at the Licensing Act, in the Champion's first greeting from Pall Mall in No. 12. The same number also publishes a letter from a professed hypocrite, on whom the Champion comments that 'at the same time that he hath found out so excellent an Art of imposing on the World, he is all the while deceiving himself' (11 December 1739, p. 82). It is exactly the language of *Jonathan Wild*, in which the Wild/Walpole equation is a given. The same language, for the same effect, is being cultivated in *The Champion*. Following hard on this increasingly specific attack, the dream vision of

Parnassus appearing in the very next issue (13 December 1739) goes as far as to present the Great Man in person. The dreamer says thus:

I observed a huge over grown Fellow, with a large Rabble at his Heels, who huzza'd him all along as he went. He had a Smile, or rather a Sneer in his Countenance, and shook most People by the Hand as he past; on each Side of him walked three Persons, with Clothes and Brushes in their Hands, who were continually employed in rubbing off Mire from him; and really he travelled through such a Quantity of Dirt, that it was as much as they could possibly do to keep him from being covered. (p. 91)

In spite of his dismissal of the 'cavil' that he is 'not bold enough' (4 December 1739), the Champion's reaction was all but immediate and it was not long before his customers found this much boldness and specificity in the pages of *The Champion*.

The Champion's own article from Pall Mall in No. 12 is particularly interesting for his all too adroit treatment of Walpole as 'Author' or 'Master of the other House' after a good deal of circumlocution. Beginning with congratulations on the Licensing Act's curbing the licentiousness of 'Poets, Players, and other idle People', the Champion presses the executive for the 'utmost Vigilance' that 'no Infringements be made in so invaluable a Law' (pp. 82–83). Such is the cautiousness and self-consciousness with which Fielding as Champion re-enters the danger zone that he further embellishes his introduction with the following:

I am concerned therefore, that I am obliged to remind them of their Duty, and more especially as I shall be necessitated to attack the Character of one of the most considerable Persons, whom this Age sees in a public Light: I mean Mr. *Theophilus Cibber*. (p. 83)

It is worth noting that the Champion seems to assume the licenser's part, in referring to Theophilus Cibber's threat that 'he will carry his Play to the other House, for "The Master of that House will give Money for any Thing"', and surreptitiously unfolding the tenor of his address as follows:

If he means the Master of *Drury-Lane* Theatre, I should be little concerned about it, seeing that I account the slandering of the Character of a private Gentleman to be of no great Consequence [...]: But as he here speaks in the Character of an Author, I don't know whether it may be so justly applied to him, as I have never heard of his giving Money for any Performance whatever; the constant Custom being, I imagine, to give an Author Benefits and not Money. I am therefore fearful, least that Speech should be applied to another Person, who is known to have given Money for any Thing; 'Who hath given Money to suppress Abuses against himself, and afterwards with as great Truth as Modesty, after many Breaches of his Word, hath accused the Person who received it of Ingratitude for exposing him.' (pp. 83–84)

Apparently reproaching opposition writers, who are 'justly abused by the *Gazetteers*' for turning the present army into ridicule, the *Champion* asks: 'who knows what Jokes they may extract out of an Army of Hobby-Horses, under the Command of such an Author, representing a ridiculous sham Fight to the People' (p. 84)? As Cleary points out, complaint about Walpole's want of enthusiasm in conducting the War with Spain, into which he was forced to enter by the national clamour just before the launch of *The Champion*, persisted in the journal's political agenda (p. 132). Thus the present article represents Walpole as the 'Author' of a 'ridiculous sham Fight' with 'an Army of Hobby-Horses'. We find the Cibber/Walpole connection still as valid in *The Champion* as in the plays. Walpole is the same 'author of a (great) farce', now in the form of a 'Battle of the Hobby-Horses', and still the 'Master' of the 'other House' in Westminster.

As mentioned earlier, the anti-Walpole outcry in *The Champion* arrives at the highest pitch in April 1740. While it remains a disputable point among critics whether this development marks the journal's acquisition of subsidy, we certainly have a series of unmistakable blows at Walpole by Fielding's hand beginning with the number for 1 April 1740.⁵¹ If Fielding's flair in getting at Walpole is nothing new in itself in *The Champion*, the consistency with which he exhibits it from the said number onwards is rather startling, for with the exception of the 'Apology for the Clergy' series (Nos. 59, 62, 65, and 68), almost all his subsequent leaders in April and

⁵¹ For the division of labour between Fielding and Ralph, especially from this phase of the journal's political evolution (suggested by Fielding himself in No. 91), and Ralph's style of political satire, see Cleary, pp. 126–28, and McCrea, pp. 82–86.

May exemplify his anti-Walpole satire at its best. The signal comes in the form of a letter from 'Vander Bruin' (No. 60, 1 April 1740), who, coming from the same habitat as Hercules Vinegar, makes his living by bear-baiting. In this allegorical letter, political strife under Walpole's regime is likened to bear-baiting at 'His Majesty's Bear-Garden in *Hockley in the Hole*', where 'two very fine He Bears' (Robert and Horatio Walpole), with 'several Curs' (pro-Walpole writers) behind them, fight against the 'Mastiffs' (opposition politicians and writers) led by 'one large Mastiff' (probably Bolingbroke).⁵²

The Champion resumes its attack on Walpole with No. 69 (22 April 1740), which with Nos. 74 and 76 (3 and 8 May respectively) represents Fielding's anti-Walpole satire at its most characteristic and distinctly theatre-oriented. In the first two of these three leaders, the front is again John Rich or Colley Cibber, the two most familiar names from Fielding's Haymarket plays. In No. 69 (22 April), for instance, Rich's pantomimes or entertainments are likened to 'the Grand Pantomimes played on the Stage of Life', for as the spectators of Rich's pantomimes do not perceive 'the several Strings, Wires, Clock-work, &c., which conduct the Machine',

in the same Manner we are deceived in the Grand Pantomimes played on the Stage of Life, where there is often no less Difference between the Appearance and Reality of Men and Things, and where those who are utter Strangers to the Springs of the political Motion, judging by Habits, Posts or Titles, have actually mistaken Men for Heroes, Patriots and Politicians, who have been in fact as mere Machines as any used by the aforesaid Mr. *Rich*.

What we have here is an almost identical rendering of the passage on the 'grand Drama' or 'Puppet-show' of human life in *Jonathan Wild*, in which the 'Great Man' plays the part of the 'Master of the Show' (III. 11, p. 166). Walpole is the same 'Harlequin' (No. 74, 3 May) or 'Master of a Raree Shew' (No. 76, 8 May) in the other two numbers in question, too. The difference, if there is any, is that they only display much greater boldness and defiant specificity. Thus the leader of No. 74, after

⁵² See Wells, p. 168n, and Cleary, pp. 128–29.

dwelling on the 'ridiculous Vanity' to leave a name behind by imposing on the world in the same manner as Rich does on his spectators, warns 'the blackest and wickedest Man in the Kingdom' of a farcical damnation, like that which befalls Rich's harlequinade in the theatre (or like Pillage's in *Eurydice Hissed*).

Mark thou the End, a Set of solemn Figures enter on the Stage, the Power of Harlequin is at an End, aloft they lift the impious long successful Sorcerer, and thrust him down the Throat of a tremendous Dragon. The Gallery rattles with Applause, and those who were even now delighted with his Tricks, seem no less pleased with his Fate.

Purporting to 'point directly at a Prime Minister', the leader in No. 76 gets even closer at Walpole, disguised as Cardinal Wolsey, who was also the cover in *Eurydice Hissed*. It accentuates Walpole as an unconstitutional intruder into Britain's polity, who, 'like the Master of a Raree Shew, [...] sets Kings on their Heads, makes the *Czar* of *Muscovy*, the King of *France*, and all other great Personages dance at his Command in whatever Manner he pleases'.

Given the ridiculous situation of the whole nation 'complaining bitterly against [...] one Man', Hercules Vinegar, in the same number, ironically wonders: 'What an Idea must we conceive of this Man, but that he is another *Hercules*, or rather a Captain *Gulliver* in a nation of Lilliputians!'. It is, however, contrary to the truth, Vinegar argues, for 'this Man should be one of the meanest and every way most contemptible in his Country', having 'no more Parts than are necessary to a very indifferent Scrivener'. He has 'neither Birth, nor Virtues, nor even Abilities to recommend him', but owes his ascendancy 'only to a fortunate Access to his Prince'. The reasoning is reminiscent of an earlier number (6 December 1739), with which the *Champion* began to respond to the public demand for anti-ministerial satire, saying 'Fortune often picks a great Man, in Jest, out of the lowest of the People' (p. 66). As mentioned earlier, the anti-Walpole satire in *The Champion* is based upon the same argument against Walpole's premiership that it is from an obscure origin (alien to the British constitution) and therefore has no authority. One of the most flagrant

illustrations of his 'low' origin is given in No. 131 (13 September 1740), where Job Vinegar describes 'a very strange Monster, who sprung up in one Night, like a mushroom, out of a Dunghill'.⁵³

'Authority' is the express subject of at least one whole leader in *The Champion* (No. 27, 15 January 1739/40), although it is a consistent issue underlying every criticism of Walpole therein. In this particular leader, authority is defined as 'that Weight in which one Man bears in the Mind of another, resulting from an Opinion of any extraordinary Qualities or Virtues inherent in him, which prepares the latter to receive the most favourable Impression from all the Words and Actions of the Person thus esteemed'. Conceived as such, authority is not inherent in the person, but conferred by the 'Opinion' of other people, that is, 'Popularity'. In public life, especially, the 'universal ill Opinion of a People' incapacitates or deauthorises one from 'any public Office, either Military or Civil'. The people 'despise and hate', among others, 'those whose Abilities are known to be in no wise equal to their Offices' and 'those who have been raised from very low to very high Degrees, without publick Merit and Services'. In keeping with the polemics of opposing lowness to authority, the present article implicitly underlines Walpole's rising by fortune from 'a Dunghill' to premiership with no authority but that which he falsely creates for himself.

Ironically, what follows is the uncanny resemblance between the two Hercules, namely, Hercules Walpole and Hercules Vinegar. The latter, too, has raised himself from as humble an origin as Hockley in the Hole to the present office as the one and only censor or judge over the whole nation 'without any other Commission or Authority than what I immediately derived from myself'. It is on the same ground of 'low' origin, low ability, low manners that Philalethes sneers at Hercules Vinegar in his letter in No. 25 (10 January 1739/40), which precedes the article on authority by only two issues. By no coincidence, the letter is understood to be a disguised attack

⁵³ It is significant that in *Shamela* and *Joseph Andrews*, the Andrews family is contemptuously referred to by the Boobys as the same 'Dunghill' order, which triggers one of the central arguments of the following chapter.

on the other Hercules (Wells, p. 166), as is made clear by a note attached by Ralph personating as Vinegar: 'My Father, Mr. *Nehemiah Vinegar* has given me to understand, that tho' the Darts contain'd in this Letter, are feather'd with my Name, they are levell'd at a much *larger Mark*' (p. 177). The letter aptly couches a provocation to Walpole in a mockery of Vinegar, whose 'Manners of Hockley' should disqualify him from his present office. By implication, Walpole's invention and assumption of premiership are as illegitimate and unjustifiable as the Hockleyan Champion's editorship of a public paper. To the same effect, Walpole is constantly likened in *The Champion* to 'a Harlequin', 'a Master of a Raree Shew', and the like, with reference to their illegitimate or low standing in the constitution of the republic of letters. We have seen exactly the same rhetoric used by Fielding in his Haymarket plays.

The final irony again lies in the fact that Hercules Vinegar is not simply a character created to meet the polemic need but a character into whom, as demonstrated in the preceding section, Fielding infuses his problematic self-awareness as author, simply removed from theatre to periodical press. As he well apprehended, neither would reward the author with a substantial 'Diet', still less the imaginary food called 'Fame'. Journalism was in itself a much-distrusted profession, directly associated with the emergence of Grub Street. It constituted the 'lower rungs' of hierarchy in the republic of letters, along with the lowborn theatrical forms, such as farces, pantomimes, ballad operas, and other amorphous entertainments. Fielding found in a retired prize-fighter from Hockley in the Hole a version of himself flourishing the pen in the same Drawcansirian manner as described by none other than the much ridiculed Colley Cibber. Even if Fielding, not to say the proprietors, wished to establish the new journal as a vehicle of elevated moral discussion after the model of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*, it would not be practicable. Not only did the public prefer less 'luscious' meals, but they also taunted the Champion's attempt to provide them otherwise. He was not 'authorised' to do so. Out of the situation involving his authorship of *The Champion*, Fielding develops an analogue to

Walpole's premiership, transferring censures and scoffs from Hercules Vinegar to 'Hercules' Walpole. On the other hand, it is also true that Fielding's view of 'authority' professed in the context of his anti-Walpole satire in *The Champion* ironically reveals his anxiety that literary as well as civil authority is not considered inherent in an author but conferred or denied by the arbitrary public. The author of a public paper too much resembles the 'master of a public house', and the 'master of the other house' (of Commons), too, for unclassical authorship is as much a 'mystery' or a trade as unconstitutional premiership. The Author and the Prime Minister meet in a mock-Hercules from Hockley in the Hole, the same habitat that nurtures Jonathan Wild.

4. The Great Man as Author: *Jonathan Wild*

As mentioned earlier, it is all but certain that Fielding conceived and drafted the greater part of *The Life of Jonathan Wild the Great* while he was actively involved with *The Champion* in 1740–41.⁵⁴ Fielding may have planned his final and most ambitious assault to date on Walpole, in view of the critical general election of 1741 approaching, the Parliament of which election would eventually oust Walpole from power in February 1742. It is relevant to this hypothesis that the politicising of *The Champion* in April 1740, too, was probably either an election-conscious gambit by the proprietary or part of the pre-election campaign instructed by opposition politicians.⁵⁵ Above all, what convinces us most of the composition of *Jonathan Wild* in this period is the striking resemblance it bears to the *Champion* essays both in basic polemics and in particular diction and details, some of which have been introduced in

⁵⁴ See Battestin, *Life*, pp. 280–82, and Cleary, pp. 192–95. Battestin also suggests the possibility that George Dodington may have been the 'inspiration' behind *Jonathan Wild* (p. 280). As for terminology, the present thesis uses the term 'novel', unless otherwise required in the context, with reference to the individual piece of prose fiction by Fielding, instead of differentiating *Jonathan Wild* and *Shamela* from the more conventional 'novels', *Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones*, and *Amelia*.

⁵⁵ As he dates the journal's subsidisation in mid-June 1740, Cleary points out the growing importance of the coming general election from that period, while he notices election-related issues and materials beginning to appear in April (p. 132).

the preceding section. In *The Champion*, as well as in the Haymarket plays, the Prime Minister is consistently and schematically equated with a set of authorial or entrepreneurial figures inventing and specialising in unclassical and therefore illegitimate literary, especially theatrical forms. Fielding casts the eponymous gang leader in *Jonathan Wild* as yet another of such illegitimate authors.

Pat Rogers describes the historical Jonathan Wild as 'perhaps the greatest folk-villain in the English-speaking world during the eighteenth century' (*Literature and Popular Culture*, p. 151). Wild's notorious career as the prince of the London criminal underworld and 'British Thief-Taker'⁵⁶ ended with his execution at Tyburn in 1725 but gave rise to a great number of accounts of his life.⁵⁷ With Jack Sheppard, a highwayman of no less celebrity, who was 'taken' on Wild's testimony and executed a year earlier than Wild (McLynn, pp. 26–28, and Nokes, pp. 11–12), he became the perennial subject of numerous criminal accounts through the 1720s and later, and especially, Walpole's *alter ego* in opposition satires. Above all, these two criminal celebrities stormed the London theatrical world in the character of Macheath and Peachum in *The Beggar's Opera*. Fielding readdressed the Wild/Walpole analogy in *Jonathan Wild*, although it had grown a 'political cliché' by the time he was writing the novel (Nokes, p. 18), giving Wild a distinct shape as 'author' of his own system. In truth, the historical Wild was an inventor of a new system, by which he founded and operated lost property offices, at the head of a team of informers conveying to him data about stolen goods, thieves, and victims, and used the same

⁵⁶ *The Weekly Journal*, 13 June 1719, quoted in Nokes, Introduction, p. 10.

⁵⁷ For details of Jonathan Wild's criminal operations, see Frank McLynn, *Crime and Punishment in Eighteenth-Century England* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. 22–30, and John Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary: Fiction and the Architecture of Mind in Eighteenth-Century England* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 140–41. Daniel Defoe published two accounts of Wild's life, one of which is reprinted in Nokes's edition of *Jonathan Wild* (pp. 221–57). Nokes also presents a list of seventeen accounts of Wild published during the three months between April and July 1725 (Appendix, pp. 260–62). For more details and discussions of contemporary criminal narratives, see Rogers, Ch. 6, Davis, Ch. 7, Bender, pp. 105–08, William Robert Irwin, *The Making of Jonathan Wild: A Study in the Literary Method of Henry Fielding* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), pp. 80–95, and John Richetti, *Popular Fiction before Richardson 1700–1739* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), Ch. 2. The exploitation of such narratives by contemporary newspapers is touched upon by Rogers (p. 20, and Ch. 6, *passim*) and Black (p. 81). Michael McKeon briefly discusses the shift from picaresque tradition to criminal biography in *Origins of the English Novel 1600–1740* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), pp. 96–100.

data for indicting disaffected thieves. He owed much of his success to 'the disguise of public service' he kept up as restorer of stolen goods and thief-taker. His was an illegitimate use of the law, and as Bender rightly argues, 'Walpole employed similar methods in a parody of traditional hierarchy and patronage' (p. 141).

In *Jonathan Wild*, the 'author' differs most from the 'Under-actors' in that the former only lays the plot to be enacted by the latter, which distinguishes the 'Stage of the World' or the 'grand Drama' authored by the Great Man from that of Drury Lane: 'whereas on the latter, the Hero, or chief Figure, is almost continually before your Eyes, whilst the Under-actors are not seen above once in an Evening; now, on the former, the Hero or GREAT MAN, is always behind the Curtain, and seldom or never appears, or doth any thing in his own Person' (III. 11, p. 166).⁵⁸ In instructing 'the well-drest Figures, who are strutting in public on the Stage, what to say and do', the author of the 'grand Drama' resembles the 'Prompter', nay, the 'Master of the [Puppet-]Show',

who dances and moves every thing; whether it be the King of *Muscovy*, or whatever other Potentate, *alias* Puppet, which we behold on the Stage; but he himself wisely keeps out of Sight; for should he once appear, the whole Motion would be at an End. Not that any one is ignorant of his being there, or supposes that the Puppets are not mere Sticks of Wood, and he himself the sole Mover; but as this (tho' every one knows it) doth not appear visibly, *i.e.* to their Eyes, no one is ashamed of consenting to be imposed upon; of helping on the *Drama*, calling the several Sticks or Puppets by the Names which the Master hath allotted to them, and assigning to each the Character which the GREAT MAN is pleased they shall move in, or rather in which he himself is pleased to move them. (pp. 166–67)

⁵⁸ Wells calls attention to the fact that Fielding had such terms as 'greatness' and 'great man' printed 'in capital letters, sometimes in extra large capitals' in the original edition, after the 'favorite practice of political pamphleteers and periodical writers of the Opposition in attacking Walpole': 'Fielding's Political Purpose in *Jonathan Wild*, *PMLA*, 28 (1913), 1–55 (p. 14). It is not only reminiscent of the bookseller's request to the Champion to lavish similar typographical gimmicks in his paper (4 December 1739), but also relevant to Fielding's flair in liberalising and counter-liberalising jokes, for example, making a 'great' man of Tom Thumb (in *Tom Thumb* and *The Tragedy of the Tragedies*). He certainly shares the tendency with his contemporaries, especially with Swift, whose inflation and deflation of Gulliver is probably the best-known example of it, and No. 76 of *The Champion* (8 May 1740) refers to Walpole as 'Captain Gulliver in a Nation of Lilliputians'. There is an interesting discussion by Nicholson of Gulliver's inflation and deflation in terms of Swift's and the nation's experience in the South Sea Bubble (Ch. 3). I will discuss Fielding's literal belittling of the Great Man in *Jonathan Wild* later in this section.

Wild himself displays similar reasoning in dividing people into two kinds, that is, 'those that use their Hands, and those that employ Hands', but the truly 'noble and GREAT', he further argues, are 'those who employ Hands for their own Use only' (I. 14, pp. 62–63).

Now, suppose a *Prig* had as many Tools as any Prime Minister ever had, would he not be as great as any Prime Minister whatsoever? Undoubtedly he would. What then have I to do in the Pursuit of GREATNESS, but to procure a Gang, and to make the Use of this Gang center in myself. This Gang shall rob for me only, receiving very moderate Rewards for their Actions; out of this Gang I will prefer to my Favour the boldest and most iniquitous (as the Vulgar express it;) the rest I will, from Time to Time, as I see Occasion, transport and hang at my Pleasure; and thus (which I take to be the highest Excellence of a *Prig*) convert those Laws which are made for the Benefit and Protection of Society, to my single Use. (p. 63)

Ironically, Wild's 'Pursuit of GREATNESS' by procuring a 'Gang' and proclaiming himself as its head or captain points to the likeness between this self-made captain of a 'Gang' of prigs and Captain Vinegar at the head of his 'Company' or Pillage the author-master of his 'Company' of actors. Or indeed the 'Great Mogul' himself! Moreover, Wild virtually appoints himself absolute judge at the end, who will hold court 'as I see Occasion' and 'transport and hang at my Pleasure'. Being an author of his own system, he does not simply appropriate the 'Laws' to his own interest but gives the Laws himself. Wild's resemblance to Vinegar, who also judges 'entirely according to my Pleasure, without any Regard had to the Laws now in Being' (22 December 1739, p. 117), is uncanny but striking, and the more so is his resemblance to the 'Founder of a new Province of Writing' in *Tom Jones*, who is also a self-proclaimed law-giver (II. 1).

It is worth digressing here to remark upon the interrelation between author-ity and authority in *Jonathan Wild*. Wild applies his 'author-ity' to swindle his 'Under-actors' of the booty they have incurred according to his plots, claiming that he who lays the scheme should have a sole and absolute right to any booty. Thus he prevails on Bob Bagshot, one of his prigs, to 'deliver the whole Booty to me, and trust to my Bounty for your Reward', in the 'same manner the Plowman, the Shepherd, the

Weaver, the Builder and the Soldier, [...] are contented with a poor Pittance (the Labourer's Hire) and permit us the GREAT to enjoy the Fruits of their Labours' (I. 8, pp. 37–38). Curiously enough, it seems that one of the earliest promulgations of authorial copyright, in terms of intellectual property, is being made by Wild: 'Is not the House built by the Labour of the Carpenter, and the Bricklayer? Is it not built for the Profit only of the Architect, [...] who could not easily have placed one Brick upon another?' (p. 38). With reference to the same argument by Wild, Bender mentions its anti-Lockean premiss that 'labor does not confer proprietary rights' (p. 161), which was in fact a crucial issue in the legal debates over the author's (perpetual) copyright conducted through the late eighteenth century.⁵⁹ According to Mark Rose, the main argument for the author's perpetual copyright was focused on the Lockean conceptualisation of literary property as the creation of an author's labour, to which the most effective objection was that literary composition, because of its peculiarity, should not constitute a property. Significantly, the proponents of the Lockean formulation were booksellers, not authors themselves, who were not only absent from the debates but resistant to the idea of literary 'labour'. Though Edward Young outlined an 'anti-mechanical theory' of literary property in his *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759), to the effect that an author's work being an original expression of his or her personality, such 'originality', not 'labour' itself, should confer a proprietary right on the author, the argument was much less influential in Britain than in Germany. The author's right is clearly at issue in Fielding's writings, too. First of all, like many of his contemporaries who were self-respecting and classically-educated, Fielding was not enthusiastic about the mechanical view of literary composition or the concept of literary property based on that view. On the other hand, his consciousness of the status of authors (not excluding himself) as little better than mere mechanics or 'Manufacturers' under the increasingly market-

⁵⁹ See Mark Rose, 'The Author as Proprietor: *Donaldson v. Becket* and the Genealogy of Modern Authorship', *Representations*, no. 23 (Summer 1988), 51–85, Martha Woodmansee, 'The Genius and the Copyright: Economic and Legal Conditions of the Emergence of the "Author"', *ECS*, 17 (1984), 425–48, and Linda Zionkowski, 'Aesthetics, Copyright, and "the goods of the mind"', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 15 (1992), 163–74.

controlled circumstances (*The Covent-Garden Journal*, No. 51) engaged him in the defence of authors' interests. He certainly believed that not all authors were worthy of the profession. Nevertheless, Fielding's writings more often than not point to the necessity to provide for even the most 'menial' of all, for example, the hacks in *The Author's Farce*. Compared with that play, *Jonathan Wild* seems to approach authorship or author-ity from two different angles. From one point of view, it is Wild's 'Under-actors' who belong with the authors in Bookweight's literary or the booksellers' 'Understrappers' in *The Covent-Garden Journal* (No. 51). Then Wild takes the place of the bookseller as (mock-)patron of authors, who in fact exploits and deprives them of their due 'right'. From the other point of view, Wild is the author, whose apparently self-interested claim to the sole ownership of the outcome of his 'plot' does not entirely belie Fielding's implied statement that an author ought to be the sole and rightful owner of the outcome of his or her plotting. Uncertain of the status and right of an author, Fielding puts a tentative formulation, anticipating Young's, into Wild's mouth, while implicitly admitting that authorship is a form of labour in reality and to be awarded with a right on that account, too.

To return, with this in mind, to Wild's exchange with Bagshot, it is interesting to observe how thoroughly Wild's 'absolute Right' is 'damned' by one of his mere 'Under-actors'. Bagshot, at first, looks 'like a Man Thunder-struck', but

at last recovering himself from his Surprise, he thus began. 'If you think, Mr *Wild*, by the Force of your Arguments, to get the Money out of my Pocket, you are greatly mistaken. What is all this Stuff to me? D—n me, I am a Man of Honour, and tho' I can't talk as well as you, by G— you shall not make a Fool of me and if you take me for one, I must tell you, you are a Rascal.' At which Words, he laid his Hand to his Sword. *Wild*, perceiving the little Success the great Strength of his Arguments had met with, and the hasty Temper of his Friend, gave over his Design for the present, and told *Bagshot*, he was only in Jest. But this Coolness had rather the Effect of Oil than Water thrown on the Flames of the other, who replied, in a Rage, 'D—n me, I don't like such Jest; I see you are a pitiful Rascal, and a Scoundrel.' (p. 39)

As his author-ity fails, Wild turns to the same 'Argumentum Baculinum', that is, the 'knock-down Argument' that prevails in the 'Amphitheatres' like the Champion's (5

January 1739/40), so that he manages to bully Bagshot out of half his share by drawing his dazzling 'Sword', and on the petty pretence of borrowing. The whole scene only stresses the 'little Success' of the Great Man's argument of authority. After all, Bob Bagshot is 'the silliest Fellow in the World', who can 'neither write nor read', and has no 'single Grain or Spark of Honour, Honesty, or Good-nature in his whole Composition' (I. 12, p. 50), and his silliness helps render his bullying boss the more ridiculous and contemptible.

Later, Wild finds a much fiercer challenger in Blueskin, another of his prigs. Blueskin's case differs from Bagshot's, in that he steals a gold watch without Wild's instruction or knowledge. Blueskin is the author of his own plot. Nevertheless, Wild claims the watch, declaring that 'I have an absolute Right to it, and that by the Laws of our Gang, of which I am providentially at the Head' (III. 14, p. 176). Blueskin is not 'Thunder-struck' or anything like that from the beginning. Instead, Blueskin immediately replies thus: 'I know not who put you at the Head of it' (III. 14, p. 176). The following speech by Blueskin is surely directed at Walpole, condemning his enrichment on the 'Labour and Hazard' of the nation. Wild tries every kind of rhetoric to impose on Blueskin, but now it is Blueskin who insists on his absolute ownership of the watch on his author-ity.

I tell you once for all, By G— I never will give you the Watch, no, nor will I ever hereafter surrender any Part of my Booty, I won it, and I will wear it. Take your Pistols yourself, and go out on the Highway, and don't lazily think to fatten yourself with the Dangers and Pains of other People. (p. 178).

Leaving the confounded boss behind, Blueskin goes to a tavern, where he and Wild's other gangsters make the 'universal Toast' to 'Mr. Wild's D—tion' (p. 178). However, Wild survives the threat by coercing the law to serve his illegal business. Wild falls on Blueskin with a constable and 'a numerous Attendance' and manages to convict him of a robbery. Considering Blueskin as authoring his own plot, we can read Wild's 'thief-taking' as an allegory of Walpole's 'author-taking', say, by the Licensing Act, which is by implication as illegitimate a distortion of the law as

Wild's. The same incident is also made to reveal Wild/Walpole's innate impotence, for Wild cannot overpower Blueskin without the aid of 'a numerous Attendance'.

The truth is that Wild's career as recorded in *Jonathan Wild* is one of a series of farcical or even cartoonesque fiascos, which exposes the Great Man's essential littleness and impotence. Wild's littleness is sometimes literalised, for example, in the episode depicting his displacement of one Roger Johnson at the head of the Newgate inmates (IV. 3).⁶⁰ On ousting Johnson, Wild puts on Johnson's 'Wastecoat embroidered with Silk' and 'Velvet Cap' (p. 193), but the 'Wastecoat' fits him 'very ill, being infinitely too big for him', and the 'Velvet Cap' is 'so heavy' that it makes his Head ache' (p. 196). The Great Man is constantly belittled, as every scheme he lays down ends in a ridiculous failure. The greatest of all is to defraud Heartfree of both his jewellery and capital, a plan which seems to be thriving, until Wild visits his beloved Lætitia Snap to show off his success. While her sister Theodosia is gone to call Lætitia, who is 'engaged in close Conference with Mr. Bagshot' at the moment, Wild finds out that the purse containing £900 (nine-tenths of the booty 'in Specie') has been stolen. It was, on his way to Lætitia's, 'unperceived drawn from him' by Molly Straddle 'in the Warmth of his amorous Caresses' (II. 3, p. 80). Concealing his humiliation, Wild then proudly takes out the casket of stolen jewels, which also turn out to be artificial stones substituted by Count la Ruse, Wild's mis-trusted accomplice.

The lightning, therefore, which should have flashed from the Jewels, flashed from [Lætitia's] Eyes, and thunder immediately followed from her Voice. She

⁶⁰ The chapter is an allegory of the state of political affairs surrounding Walpole's fall in 1742, thought to have been added after Fielding witnessed Pulteney and Carteret betraying the opposition (Goldgar, pp. 186–88, and Battestin, *Life*, pp. 336–37). In this chapter, Roger Johnson stands for Walpole, but it is open to dispute whom Wild represents. Wells (pp. 2, 50) and Battestin (*Life*, p. 338) suggest Pulteney, which seems to me the likeliest choice, considering that as 'Walpole's most vocal critic' (Cleary, p. 49), Pulteney fits well into Roger Johnson's 'florid'-speaking opponent, and that Fielding has already shown his distrust of Pulteney in *The Welsh Opera* (1731), where he depicts William (Pulteney) the coachman as no less self-serving and hypocritical than Robin (Walpole) the butler (Cleary, pp. 49–50). Bender proposes the Earl of Wilmington, who actually succeeded Walpole as Lord Treasurer after his fall (p. 162), previously suggested by Aurellian Digeon and Whitwell Elwin: see Irwin, p. 40, and Wells, p. 3 respectively. Irwin's choice is John Carteret, who, he argues, virtually became the Prime Minister as Secretary of State (p. 40), and Cleary's Wild stands for at once Pulteney and Carteret (p. 195). For an account of the historical Roger Johnson, see Nokes, p. 276n.

be-knaved, be-rascalled, be-rogued the unhappy Hero, who stood silent, confounded with Astonishment, but more with Shame and Indignation, at being thus out-witted and overreached. (pp. 82–83)

The key of the scene is that of ‘thunder’ and ‘lightning’ (as in Fustian’s rehearsal), of a ‘Drollic’ farce, as implied in the comparison of Wild’s tawdry jewellery to ‘those beautiful Necklaces, with which at the Fair of *Bartholomew*, they deck the well whitened Neck of *Thalestris* Queen of the *Amazons*, *Anna Bullen*, Queen *Elizabeth*, or some other High Princess in *Drollic* Story’ (p. 82). Wild’s whole career is set to the same key.

Having failed in the greatest scheme of his life, which would have earned him a few thousand pounds, Wild returns to his usual petty pilfering. Indeed Wild’s business often turns on a matter of two shillings, of which Wild takes three-fourths amounting to ‘eighteen Pence’ (II. 1, p. 66). In the scene of marriage settlement (III. 7), too, all the behind-the-scenes calculations and showy formalities between the Wilds and Snaps are in pursuit of Lætitia’s ‘Fortune (to wit, Seventeen Pounds and nine Shillings in Money and Goods)’ (III. 7, p. 148). The ‘small-scale shabbiness’ of Wild’s business, as Rawson puts it, contributes to the process of belittling or farcicalising the Great Man.⁶¹

In addition to his essential pettiness, Wild’s poor relationship with women, symptomatic of his impotence, is most damaging to his greatness. In heroic tragedy, the hero is routinely faced with a conflict between love and honour, or indeed between two women, as exemplified in Dryden’s *All for Love*. Fielding burlesqued this cliché in *Tom Thumb* and *The Tragedy of Tragedies*, where Tom Thumb the hero causes the rivalry between Princess Huncamunca and Queen Dollalolla, and between Huncamunca and the captive giantess Glumdalca respectively. Before Fielding, Gay’s *Beggar’s Opera* also showed Polly and Lucy vying for Macheath and even intensified the absurdity of this clichéd heroic situation by introducing four more wives with four

⁶¹ Claude J. Rawson, *Henry Fielding and the Augustan Ideal under Stress* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 110–01.

children (III. 15). In *Jonathan Wild*, however, what harasses the hero is not the rivalry of two or more women for his love, but his continual fiascos in love affairs. His affair with Molly Straddle⁶² has already cost him £900. Above all, Wild's fatal attraction to Lætitia subjects him to a series of most 'bloody' let-downs. From his first visit to Lætitia (I. 9), Wild gets jilted in a most humiliating and literally bloody manner.

The lovely *Lætitia*, either out of Prudence, or perhaps Religion, of which she was a liberal Professor, was deaf to all his Promises, and luckily invincible by his Force; for though she had not yet learnt the vulgar Art of clenching her Fist, Nature had not, however, left her defenceless; for at the Ends of her fingers she wore Arms, which she used with such admirable Dexterity, that the hot Blood of Mr. *Wild* soon began to appear in several little Spots on his Face, and his full-blown Cheeks to resemble that Part which Modesty forbids a Boy to turn up any where but in publick School, after some Pedagogue, strong of Arm, hath exercised his Talents thereon. (pp. 42–43)

Wild's humiliation does not stop there, for Lætitia's favour, grudged to Wild, is generously bestowed on other gallants, all of whom are Wild's 'Under-actors'. The 'fair Conqueress' of the above scuffle returns to her 'dear Tommy', Tom Smirk, who turns out to have been hiding in her closet during Wild's unsuccessful visit. Even the silly Bob Bagshot is another of Lætitia's lovers, and Wild finds Fireblood 'in the Arms of his lovely Lætitia' later in one of the Newgate scenes (IV. 11), which eventually leads to a grotesque boxing-match between the two inmates with chained legs (p. 233).

Lætitia is not the only woman who gives the hero hard times. Wild manages to beguile Mrs. Heartfree into eloping with him till, on Wild's attacking her at sea, Mrs. Heartfree's shrieks call in the captain and crew of the ship to beat Wild black and blue. Wild's fiascos are always physical and bloody, especially with women. On the second day of his imprisonment, Wild is visited by Lætitia, whose tears he mistakes for a token of concern. As she laments her own disgraceful future after he is hanged, Wild chides her for the 'unnecessary Concern on his Account', for he is confident of a

⁶² Molly Straddle was modelled on Walpole's mistress Maria Skerrett, who had eventually become his second wife in 1738 (Wells, p. 29).

reprieve. 'On your Account,' says Lætitia, 'and be d—d to you!' (IV. 2, p. 189). The scene ends up with another farcical scuffle between man and wife, when Wild throws her out of the cell, but not before she has 'with her Nails left a bloody Memorial on his Cheek' (p. 190).

All the rough-and-tumbles arising from Wild's unfortunate love affairs produce vivid narrative farces, which, had they been enacted on the stage, would certainly have proved themselves standard knock-about scenes. In fact, farcical elements in Fielding's novels are not seldom pointed out by critics. Claude Rawson's approach to them is typical, placing primary emphasis on the 'stylizations of drollic farce', which he describes as constituting 'a crucial if sometimes unacknowledged part of Fielding's novelistic manner' in general (pp. 102–03). With regard to Fielding's involvement with puppet theatre and penchant for farcical 'lowness in both matter and manner', Rawson claims that they reveal the 'element of that patrician readiness to assert itself on the side of genuine demotic vitality against more bourgeois forms of genteelism'.⁶³ Rawson's is an essentially 'patrician' interpretation of Fielding's involvement with popular entertainments, so that in referring to two direct allusions to farce in *Jonathan Wild* in particular (II. 3 and III. 11), Rawson argues that 'these two instances explicitly link Wild with a not unamiable tradition of clowning roguery, in fiction and on the stage' (*Henry Fielding and the Augustan Ideal under Stress*, p. 114). The reader is invited 'to laugh, more or less genially, at him and from above', which Rawson sees characterising the 'Augustan' attitude to the clownesque rogue as 'mainly or "merely" funny, [...] an "outsider" only in the sense that he was entirely beneath notice except as someone to be amused by for a few pence' (p. 116). Though I agree with Rawson on Wild's clownesque or farcical associations, Rawson's overall account of Fielding's 'genial', and especially 'patrician' attitude towards popular entertainments seems to me out of touch with both his anything but 'genial' self-

⁶³ Claude Rawson, *Order from Confusion Sprung: Studies in Eighteenth-Century Literature from Swift to Cowper* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1985), p. 287. For detailed information of Fielding's puppet theatre, see Martin C. Battestin, 'Fielding and "Master Punch" in Panton Street', *PQ*, 45 (1966), 191–208.

awareness as 'author of a farce' and his complex relations with the patriciate and with Walpole.

Perhaps there is room for 'genial' laughter, if *Jonathan Wild* is simply read as a farcical recapitulation of the life of an eighteenth-century thief and thief-taker, who did have a certain appeal, attractive or not, to the popular imagination. It cannot be read as such, however, when the novel is seen in historical context as a transparent allegory of Walpole's political career towards the end of his long premiership. The opposition's anti-Walpole campaign was at the highest pitch, but as they knew, Walpole had survived crises. The re-execution of the long-dead thief-taker would have become a most timely and ominous prediction about Walpole's impending end, if *Jonathan Wild* had been published at this juncture. Supposing that Walpole did suppress *Jonathan Wild* (it seems likely enough to me), its geniality would have been the last reason for his doing so at this critical and probably busiest moment of his life. Even if he knew nothing of the real contents of the work in progress or in preparation for publication, Walpole certainly knew what to expect from the author of *The Historical Register* and *Eurydice Hissed*. In his usual manner, Fielding attempts to undermine Walpole's authority by stressing his impotence and pettiness, by rendering Wild/Walpole low, vulgar, and contemptible. Fielding makes Wild go through a series of 'bloody' knock-about horse-plays, so that the reader can laugh at Walpole in laughing at Wild.

In *Jonathan Wild*, Wild/Walpole is essentially an author of a farce, who sets up his own stage, makes plots, and claims an absolute control over his 'Under-actors'. However, Wild's author-ity is constantly challenged by his very 'Under-actors', recalling the similar fate of Fielding's rehearsal Authors. Besides, the resemblance between Wild and Hercules Vinegar is particularly remarkable, as underlined earlier. Both come from Hockley in the Hole, represent Walpole, proclaim themselves 'Captain' without anybody's consent, and are 'damned' in one way or another. Though it seems unlikely, at first glance, to find any link between Wild's career and

Fielding's,⁶⁴ *Jonathan Wild* contains enough material, as I have demonstrated, to convince us that Wild is essentially of the same character as Vinegar and Pillage, too, into whom Fielding infuses his anxiety about authorship without authority. It is always perplexingly typical of Fielding to convert this anxiety into a polemic ridicule of Walpole's (want of) authority, and vice versa.

5. Authoring the Great Man

One of the most persistent questions facing the reader of *Jonathan Wild* is how to understand its eccentric narrator. With his apparently inverted moral values and volatile expressions of self-congratulation, is the narrator to be considered as a persona representing a different self from the real author Henry Fielding or simply his ironising surrogate? John Bender, for example, construes him as a 'heavily ironic narrator' who firmly controls the meaning of the narrated story (p. 151), whereas Charles A. Knight finds in him 'a clearly unreliable narrator' at variance with the real author.⁶⁵ This seems to me just another example of the contentions between persona and anti-persona criticism, which, as pointed out in my introduction, always accompany highly ironic texts and will probably persist as chronic problems in literary interpretation. Seeing the double capacity of Fielding's Authors, more often than not accommodating Fielding and his butts or foes simultaneously, the present analysis does not purport to answer the question whether the Author of *Jonathan Wild* is identifiable with Fielding or not. To me it appears that the relations of the Author to the Great Man are more importantly at issue in *Jonathan Wild* and more responsible

⁶⁴ Bender calls attention to Fielding's likeness to Wild, especially in his later career as legal thief-taker, in seeking to impose civil power by controlling informations and documents: 'schemes to exercise authority through written instruments lie at the heart of Fielding's program as a justice of the peace, as founder of a police force, as inventor of newspaper advertising schemes that appropriated and extended the methods of thief-takers like the historical Wild' (p. 156). Bender also argues that Fielding's novels are constructed on the same principle (Chs. 5 and 6). The 'uncanny resemblances between Wild and Fielding as thieftakers' are referred to by Jonathan Lamb, too: 'Exemplarity and Excess in Fielding's Fiction', *Eighteenth Century Fiction*, 1 (1989), 187–207 (p. 202n).

⁶⁵ Charles A. Knight, 'Satire and Conversation: The Logic of Interpretation', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 26 (1985), 239–61 (pp. 251, 254).

for the enigmatic posture of the Author. In the following account of the Author of *Jonathan Wild*, I will therefore concentrate on these very relations and their effects on the story of the Great Man told by the Author, especially in terms of Fielding's problematic attitude towards 'people of quality' in general as well as *the* Great Man, which, as I will show at the end of this section, becomes even more critical at this particular stage of his career.

In his ironically flaunting epistle to Walpole in 1730, as cited earlier in the preceding chapter, Fielding teases the Great Man with the question: 'Would you not wonder, Sir, to view Your Bard a greater Man than you?' (5). The reasons given in the same epistle for the greater greatness of the Bard are largely ironic, for example, from the Bard's greater castle (in the air), to his higher position (in his garret), to his more frequent levees (of creditors), than the Great Man's. Towards the conclusion, though, the greater Bard is willing to 'come down, with wond'rous Ease' (45), to whatever place the Great Man may grant him. He could, among other things, 'foreign Treaties dish up' for the Great Man, as his credentials are as follows: '*Tuscan* and *French* are in my Head;| *Latin* I write, and *Greek* I—read' (52, 55). The Bard puts his linguistic accomplishments at the service of the Great Man, who, it is implied, lacks the like qualities himself. The drift of the epistle is reshaped in the dedication to the same Great Man of *The Modern Husband* in 1732 as follows:

As the best Poets have owed their Reward to the greatest Heroes and Statesmen of their Times, so those Heroes have owed to the Poet that Posthumous Reputation, which is generally the only Reward that attends the greatest Actions.

It is poets that create great men, conferring the 'only Reward' of 'Posthumous Reputation' on them, and therefore the former are (implicitly) greater than the latter. In reality, however, it is poets who depend on great men for the 'Reward' of a more substantial kind, thus reducing themselves, like the Bard of the earlier epistle, into 'humble Creatures' (48), who exchange literary accomplishments including classical letters for parasitic existence on 'people of quality'. As mentioned earlier, Fielding

was not wholly ironic in either address to Walpole, as he was in fact making overtures for his patronage in these years. With his overtures ignored by the Great Man, Fielding turned to the thoroughly anti-Walpole plays in 1736–37, for which he incurred the retaliation of the Great Man with the Licensing Act in 1737. In *Jonathan Wild*, Fielding again turns the tables upon the Great Man, by playing on the interrelation between the Author and the Great Man. Thus the paradoxical Author of the Great Man, at once extremely self-congratulating and extremely servile, is somehow reminiscent of the Bard of the 1730 epistle, greater than the Great Man but obliged to ‘dish up’ some panegyrics on him. In exposing the procedures by which a great man is ‘authored’, Fielding imbeds in *Jonathan Wild* a surreptitious requital, at once self-comforting and self-deriding, for the abject dependence of authors on great men.

With that in mind, it is interesting to notice that the very first episode the Author records concerning the Great Man’s ancestry pertains to the linguistic inadequacy of the family. A befitting ancestor of ‘Mr. Jonathan Wild, or Wyld’, not always agreeing in ‘one Method of Spelling his Name’ (I. 2, p. 13), the ‘great Wolfstan Wild’ is said to have distinguished himself at the Saxons’ massacres of the Britons by misunderstanding ‘*Nemet eour Saxes, Take out your Swords*’ for ‘*Nemet her Sacs, Take out their Purses*’, thus initiating the occupation of the family. As shown in the chapter heading, the following account of Wild’s ancestry is the outcome of the Author’s ‘carefully [sifting] the Rubbish of Antiquity’ with the view of establishing ‘as many of our Hero’s Ancestors as can be gathered’, thanks to which we hear of ‘as many’ as four Wilds in all before the generation of the hero’s grandfather. As a whole, the chapter offers a shabby mock-ancestry ‘carefully sifted’ by the Author to aggrandise the obscure background of the Great Man, who comes from the same ‘unsavoury’ Hockley in the Hole as Captain Vinegar.⁶⁶ As Wells points out, it may have been written with a specific target in view, that is, *The Brief and True History of Robert Walpole and his Family from their Original to the Present Time*, written by

⁶⁶ See Nokes, *Jonathan Wild* (I. 2, p. 44).

one William Musgrave and published by the notorious bookseller Edmund Curll in 1738, in which both personal and family backgrounds of the Great Man were expatiated upon over dozens of pages (p. 20).⁶⁷

When it comes to the birth of the Great Man himself, mere human history is not good enough, so that a myth is created of his nativity. The Author summons much of his classical erudition to mystify the birth as follows:

It is observable that Nature seldom produces any one who is afterwards to act a notable Part on the Stage of Life, but she gives some Warning of her Intention; and as the dramatic Poet generally prepares the Entry of every considerable Character, with a solemn Narrative, or at least a great Flourish of Drums and Trumpets; so doth this our *Alma Mater* by some shrewd Hints, pre-admonish us of her Intention. Thus *Astyages*, who was the Grandfather of *Cyrus*, dreamed that his Daughter was brought to Bed of a Vine, whose Branches overspread all *Asia*, and *Hecuba*, while big with *Paris*, dreamed that she was delivered of a Firebrand that set all *Troy* in Flames; so did the Mother of our Great Man, while she was with child of him, dream that she was enjoyed in the Night by the Gods of *Mercury*, and *Priapus*. (I. 3, pp. 15–16)

In truth, it is not Nature but the Author who is here playing the part of the ‘dramatic Poet’ introducing the hero with ‘a solemn Narrative, or at least a great Flourish of Drums and Trumpets’. Framing the mythic pretension of the passage to follow, this particular allusion subtly draws attention to the artifice of the Author, and in particular the ‘great Flourish of Drums and Trumpets’, qualified with the reductive ‘at least’, seems to suggest, more than anything else, the boisterousness of popular stages at fairgrounds and the like, or indeed of prize-rings at Hockley in the Hole or Tottenham. Fustian would aptly refer to that as the ‘Paraphernalia’ of a hero, as ‘Thunder and Light’ning’ are those of a ghost in his farce. Thus all the blaring mystification concerning the hero’s nativity is in fact appropriately tuned to the overall farcical key of the story to come, as underlined in the preceding section. It is of the same note, for example, as the ‘Drollic’ farces at the ‘Fair of Bartholomew’,

⁶⁷ Wells also suspects that it is not accidental that Wild senior and junior are namesakes, like the Walpoles, and Wild’s grandfather is given the same first name ‘Edward’ as Walpole’s (pp. 19–20).

and the great hero of *Jonathan Wild* is a mock-hero who belongs with the queens and princesses at Bartholomew (II. 3, p. 82).

The mysterious dream of Wild's mother, the Author goes on, 'puzzled all the learned Astrologers of her Time', because of the contradictory offices of the two gods Mercury and Priapus:

Mercury being the God of Ingenuity, and *Priapus* the Terror of those who practised it. What made this Dream the more wonderful, and perhaps the true Cause of its being remembered, was a very extraordinary Circumstance, sufficiently denoting something preter-natural in it; for tho' she had never heard even the Name of either of these Gods, she repeated these very Words in the morning, with only a small Mistake of the Quantity of the latter, which she chose to call *Priāpus* instead of *Priāpus*; and her husband swore that, tho' he might possibly have named *Mercury* to her (for he had heard of such an Heathen God), he never in his Life could have any wise put her in Mind of that other Deity, with whom he had no Acquaintance. (p. 16)

In this account of Wild's parents, the linguistic inadequacy of the Wild family is hinted at again. At the expense of Mrs. Wild, the Author nicely refers to the 'small Mistake' in pronouncing the name of Priapus. It is after all more than just a linguistic deficiency, for the god is completely unknown to the Wilds. Learning, especially classical learning, is not among the attributes of the family, a deficiency which the Author is here to make up for.

Linguistic deficiency turns out to be the most significant inheritance of the Great Man himself, as appears from his love letter to the 'most Devine and adwhorable' Lætitia (III. 6, p. 145). This episode is particularly important in our understanding of the implied relations between the Author and the Great Man. The following is the Author's dubious apology for Wild's letter being 'not so strictly orthographical':

If the spelling of this Letter be not so strictly orthographical, the Reader will be pleased to remember, that such a Defect might be worthy of Censure in a low and Scholastic Character, but can be no Blemish in that sublime GREATNESS of which we endeavour to raise a complete Idea in this History. In which kind of Composition, Spelling, or indeed any kind of human Literature, hath never been thought a necessary Ingredient; for if these sort of GREAT Personages can but complot and contrive their noble Schemes, and hack and hew Mankind sufficiently, there will never be wanting fit and able Persons who can spell, to record their Praises. (III. 6, pp. 145–46)

This is another rendering of Vinegar's ironic refutation of the necessity of any 'Human Literature', especially in 'those dead Tongues', in *The Champion* (No. 18, 25 December 1739), where Vinegar, avowedly contemptuous of learning himself, maintains that 'the Law supposes a Nobleman to be utterly void of it, for it provides that he shall have his Clergy, even tho' he can't read' (p. 128). 'Human Literature' (p. 129) is required only of a 'low and Scholastic Character' like the present Author, who with his fellow authors or 'Historians', like the clergy in Vinegar's article, serves the great in clerkship, as their 'speller' and panegyrist. The point is further sharpened as follows:

Again, if it should be observed that the Style of this Letter doth not exactly correspond with that of our Hero's Speeches, which we have here recorded, we answer, it is sufficient if in these the Historian adheres faithfully to the Matter, though he embellishes the Diction with some Flourishes of his own Eloquence, without which the excellent Speeches recorded in ancient Historians (particularly in *Sallust*) would have scarce been found in their Writings. Nay, even amongst the Moderns, famous as they are for Elocution (it may be doubted whether those inimitable Harangues, published in the *Monthly Magazines*) came literally from the Mouths of the HURGOS, &c. as they are there inserted, or whether we may not rather suppose some Historian of great Eloquence hath borrowed the Matter only, and adorned it with those Rhetorical Flowers for which many of the said HURGOS are not so extremely eminent. (p. 146)

With the Scriblerian touch of the 'Hurgos', meaning great men in the Lilliputian tongue, the passage directs a familiar satire at the modern 'Hurgos [who] are not so extremely eminent' for literary accomplishments. No less censure is reserved for their 'embellishing' authors, prostituting their presumed 'Rhetorical Flowers' at the other end of these dealings. Though it is primarily aimed at *the* Hurgo with known apathy to letters, the present reflection contains more than just an individual invective. Set in one of the final campaigns against Walpole, whose regime has by now completed the relegation of men of letters to political clerkship, it divulges what cannot be far from Fielding's version of the core of current relations of authors to great men in general, including his own. Yet, it is again by refocusing their

interrelation that he overturns the subjection of authors. Unembellished by their authors, the 'Hurgos', it is implied, should be as vulgar as the 'adwhoring' Wild. Then, who is patronising whom? If only in an imagined retrieval of self-esteem, authors are greater than the great, for the great are 'Creatures' of authors, not the other way round.

In accordance with the ironic equation of the 'Scholastic Character' with the 'low' in relation to the great, the Author owns himself 'of that humble Kind of Mortals who consider themselves born for the Behoof of some GREAT MAN or other', or indeed one of the 'thousand such Reptiles' (I. 14, p. 61) as servilely labour for one Great Man. In doing so, the Author provides an upward perspective, both literally and metaphorically, in which Wild's greatness is to be viewed. In the 'Passage on to Greatness', the Great Man is comparable to 'a Traveller over the Alps',

or, if this be a too far fetched Simile, to one who travels westward over the Hills near *Bath*, where the simile was indeed made. He sees not the End of his Journey at once; but passing on from Scheme to Scheme, and from Hill to Hill, with noble Constancy, resolving still to attain the Summit on which he has fixed his Eye, however dirty the Roads may be through which he struggles, he at length arrives at — some vile Inn, where he finds no Kind of Entertainment nor Conveniency for Repose. (p. 61)⁶⁸

The jest of the Author's lowering himself to the level of 'Reptiles' derives from their prostrate posture, which means the literally lowest position and point of view, as well as from their metaphorically low station in the Great Chain of Being. Seen from such 'reptile' point of view, the Alpine greatness appears so 'diminutive' that it is 'invisible to the naked Eye', barely discernible 'through a Microscope'. The Author's extremely servile and upward posture results in literally belittling the Great Man almost into invisibility.

⁶⁸ Fielding spent the late summer and autumn of 1741 at Bath, probably making the acquaintance of Ralph Allen, who would become one of his most important benefactors and a model for Squire Allworthy with Lyttelton. According to Battestin, it was at Allen's Prior Park near Bath, where Pope sojourned as his guest during the autumn and winter of the same year, writing the 1743 *Dunciad*, that Fielding, then well advanced in *Joseph Andrews*, possibly enjoyed the poet's company (*Life*, pp. 315–17). The present allusion to Bath signifies that Fielding was working on parts of *Jonathan Wild* as well as on *Joseph Andrews* during his sojourn there.

The Author's deliberately lowered posture in relating the life of the Great Man sheds a significant light on Fielding's self-awareness as author in relation to the great, which had grown particularly problematic at this stage of his career. By the time Fielding was conceiving a mock-biography of Robert Walpole, the author's relations with the Great Man had come through several major fluctuations: the author's flirtations with the Great Man for patronage in the early 1730s; the popular triumph of the author over the Great Man with the plays of 1736–37; the Great Man's subjugation of the author with the Licensing Act of 1737; and the return of the author as the Champion, when the Great Man had only two years left of his incredible two decades' premiership. However, Fielding's final and most ambitious assault to date on the Great Man was not published until its appearance as the third volume of *Miscellanies* in 1743, when its anti-Walpole campaign had already become a lost cause, with the former Prime Minister subscribing to Fielding's *Miscellanies* as Earl of Orford!⁶⁹

Conflicting theories of the composition (and suppression) of *Jonathan Wild* have been proffered, with matching hypotheses about the relationship between Fielding and Walpole in the last years of Walpole's premiership. The most plausible of all is again Battestin's, to the effect that Walpole silently suppressed the publication of *Jonathan Wild* by buying up its author. Battestin is probably right in discerning Fielding's admission of the fact in the following excerpt from *The Champion* (4 October 1740), where the Prime Minister is depicted as a 'Quack':

I own, being in an ill State of Health, I accepted a few to stop the Publication of a Book, which I had written against his Practice, and which he threaten'd to take the Law of me, if I publish'd: These Pills, tho' a mere Matter of Bargain, he was pleas'd to consider as a great Obligation: But I can tell him, his Nostrums have now done so much Mischief, that whoever takes any Reward of him to secure his Practice any longer, deserves more to be hang'd, and is a more infamous VILLAIN than any on the Records of the *Old Bailey*.

⁶⁹ See Henry Knight Miller, General Introduction, in *Miscellanies; Volume One*, p. xlviii.

Battestin suggests that Fielding probably accepted Walpole's money because of his worsening financial circumstances (metaphorically referred to as 'an ill State of Health') and the threat of prosecution for libel (p. 285).⁷⁰ For whatever reasons, it was a clandestine 'Bargain', which ought to have disturbed Fielding's self-esteem, not to say his conscience. What he would prefer to imagine 'a mere Matter of Bargain' on equal (or equally dishonourable) terms, the overbearing Prime Minister regarded 'as a great Obligation', which appears to have particularly vexed the obliged author.

Whatever the vexation, a lapse of fourteen months let Fielding publish one of his most controversial compliments to Walpole in *The Opposition: A Vision* (15 December 1741).⁷¹ In this dream vision, Walpole is introduced as a benevolent 'Gentleman' with 'one of the pleasantest best-natured Countenances' (p. 20), who, towards the conclusion, frees the ill-fed asses of the 'Opposition Waggon' to graze in 'a delicious Meadow' (p. 23). One of the 'worst fed Asses' is identified as 'that long-sided Ass they call *Vinegar*, which the Drivers call upon so often to *gee up*, and *pull lustily*', of which one of the passengers says, 'I never saw an Ass with a worse Mane, or a more shagged Coat' (p. 17). Fielding was probably disposed to commend Walpole's magnanimity more because he felt under-rewarded by his opposition patrons, than because he really believed Walpole more generous. As he often implied in *The Champion*, Fielding would not willingly embroil himself with strictly partisan writings, not least because they were considered 'distasteful political hack work'

⁷⁰ Goldgar also suggests *Jonathan Wild* as the 'Book' referred to by Fielding here (p. 198), while Cleary goes for *The Grub-Street Opera* of 1731 (p. 138). There is no proving either with certainty, but *Jonathan Wild* seems the likelier candidate to me, for considering the day-to-day nature of journalism, the suppression of *The Grub-Street Opera* is too old an issue, and as Goldgar points out, the play was in fact published though suppressed as a production.

⁷¹ *The Opposition: A Vision* appeared in public while the new Parliament of the 1741 general election was in session to decide the fate of Robert Walpole. This most controversial of all Fielding's writings still remains a conundrum to Fielding critics, because of its apparent defection from the opposition campaign, and that more surprisingly, to vindicate Walpole. W. B. Coley denies Fielding's selling his pen to Walpole at this juncture, on the ground that no comment whatsoever was made on any similar traffic between them by Horace Walpole, the Prime Minister's son, who was no friend to Fielding and therefore would not have missed a chance to inveigh against Fielding's integrity: 'Henry Fielding and the Two Walpoles', *PQ*, 45 (1966), 157-78. Thomas Cleary insists on the pro-Patriot consistency of Fielding's rhetoric in *The Opposition* (pp. 152-62). But both Goldgar and Battestin admit that Fielding was not above accepting Walpole's patronage, especially at a time when he was deeply disillusioned with opposition politicians and in desperate need of money: see Goldgar, p. 205, and Martin C. Battestin, 'Fielding's Changing Politics and *Joseph Andrews*', *PQ*, 39 (1960), 39-55 (p. 40).

(Battestin, p. 322). Still, such hack work was required of Vinegar, first by the public and the booksellers, and then by his political patrons, and that for no adequate recompense. Most probably, *Jonathan Wild* was also conceived and written under similar circumstances. Fielding's self-esteem as author may well have been at the lowest ebb. As if even his customary self-presentation as a hackney coachman or a master of a public house were then too flattering, Fielding further demeaned his authorial self to the sub-human level, as the drudging ass in *The Opposition* or the reptile of a labourer in servitude to the great in *Jonathan Wild*.

Walpole was Fielding's and every 'poet's foe' for twenty years, because his apathy to men of letters promoted the ethos that 'wit is no qualification for high office, nor is appreciation of poetry essential to the function of a minister' (Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits*, p. 17). What followed was yet no simple divorce between letters and politics but an unambiguous subjection of the former to the latter, which appeared to most contemporaries qualitatively different from the relationship between them in the Augustan or the Renaissance-style courtly tradition. Walpole made it clear that he was not and did not intend to be a Maecenas nor a Sir Philip Sidney, and however hopelessly out of date, the opposition forged a weapon out of his want of classical faculties on top of the unconstitutionality of premiership. This was the same weapon that Fielding aimed at Walpole, by depicting him as a *farceur*, a prize-fighter from Hockley, a nobody sprung 'out of a Dunghill', an 'adwhoring' thief, or simply every low, mean, vulgar boor imaginable. However, such equations are often complicated because they are intertwined with Fielding's self-portrayal as author. In relation to the more commercial aspects of authorship, Fielding presents a 'Hackney Writer' like himself as a servant to the public. On the other hand, an author is no less a servant to the great, in playing a 'political Underpart', as Fielding puts it in the dedication of *Tumble-Down Dick*, in contemporary theatre or farce of politics. To continue with the same analogy, it eventually makes little difference which company this 'Underactor' (a Wildian term) belongs to. Once stripped of polemic self-glorification, the reality of an opposition hack scarcely differs from that of the

ministerial counterpart, as I have earlier emphasised with reference to Nicholas Amhurst's case. Likewise, it is no wonder that the Champion could not fundamentally detach himself from the murky world of the Gazetteers or the like.

Fielding's ambivalence towards 'people of quality' at large and his frustration in being obliged to beg patronage of them were there from the beginning of his career as author, and so was his imagining of the greater greatness that goes with the 'Bard' in creating great men. In Fielding's anti-Walpole satires, that fantasy, at once self-aggrandising and self-ridiculing, works out a most effective rhetoric to mock the supposedly vulgar Great Man, who, like Jonathan Wild, badly wants some 'authoring' or 'embellishing'. It is in relation to his own patrons, though, that Fielding's self-awareness as author is given its more personal and urgent expression. *The Opposition* is the best example in this regard, perhaps a 'timely utterance' for Fielding, at a time when his relations with the great were about to enter another dimension, with his service on the opposition campaign coming to a period and a new career as ministerial writer about to develop in a few years' time. Fielding would later express similar grievances about his unrequited services as ministerial writer, too, most notably when closing *The True Patriot*. Likewise, there had been earlier if less obtrusive disclosures of Fielding's frustrated feelings towards his subordination to the great in general, including his actual or potential patrons. We have already remarked in the plays Fielding's sarcastic comments on the conventions of patronage, dedication, subscription, and the like, which seemed to him to perpetuate authors' subjection to unregarding 'people of quality'. In addition, at least a couple of direct addresses to his patrons preceding the thoroughly despairing *Opposition: A Vision* adumbrated Fielding's tensioned relationship with them. In the dedication to the Earl of Chesterfield of *Don Quixote in England* (1734), Fielding pays particular eulogy to the current leader of the opposition as 'the most favourite Offspring of the *British* Muses, the Patron of their younger Children'. Significantly, this more or less diplomatic and predictable panegyric is followed by the allusion that his 'only Rewards' lie in being 'celebrated' and 'applauded' by the poets. Likewise, in

addressing his poem 'Of True Greatness' (1741) to Dodington,⁷² whom he puffs as 'Maecenas [...] in no Augustan Age' (200), Fielding states that 'Bards only give the never-fading Wreath' (163). It is true that these are in themselves well established sentiments from earlier traditions,⁷³ but in the present context they subtly betray Fielding's more personal longing to surmount his matter-of-fact dependence on the patrons. Underneath their more or less facetious surfaces, these and the other addresses to Walpole seem to reveal the same tension between an imagined 'Bard' bestowing honour on the otherwise ephemeral great and the drudging author begging recognition of them. Hence the fugitive self-aggrandisement of 'the great tatter'd Bard', who

thro' the Streets
 [...] cautious treads, least any Bailiff meets:
 Whose wretched Plight the Jest of all is made;
 Yet most, if hapless, it betray his Trade. [...]
 And yet with Want and with Contempt oppress,
 Shunn'd, hated, mock'd, at once Men's Scorn and Jest,
 Perhaps, from wholesome Air itself confin'd
 Who hopes to drive out Greatness from his Mind?
 ('Of True Greatness', 172, 180)

As mentioned earlier, Fielding's self-esteem as author appears at its lowest ebb, even below the human level, towards the end of his opposition career. Unlike the 'Craftsman' Amhurst, who, totally deserted by his patrons, 'died of [...] a broken Heart' in 1742 (Ralph, *Case*, p. 32), the 'long-sided Ass' called the 'Champion' would somehow survive the political shambles in the aftermath of Walpole's removal from power. Unrequited and deeply disillusioned, Fielding would remain retired from political writings until he was recalled by his Broad Bottom patrons now in the ministry in 1745. Meanwhile, just two months after the publication of *The Opposition*, he published *Joseph Andrews*, a history of 'Footman, Country Wench,

⁷² Originally published in January 1740/1, the poem was collected in the first volume of *Miscellanies* in 1743. References are to this edition.

⁷³ Miller annotates the line (beginning with 'Bards') with a selection of contemporary remarks of the same kind (p. 25n).

and Country Priest', as it was later called in derision,⁷⁴ in which Fielding's implied equation of author with footman to 'people of quality' was largely responsible for his wholly reoriented sympathy with these 'low' characters of the 'Reptile of a lower Order' (IV. 6, p. 298). As we will see in the following chapter, the same 'reptile' of an Author plots a most hilarious retaliation upon 'people of quality' in *Shamela* and especially in *Joseph Andrews*. In so doing, the Author also imagines a new kind of 'true greatness' or moral authority in the 'low' characters in thorough antagonism to those failed authorities, and attempts to define a new kind of literary authority for himself, paradoxically in terms of freedom from the authorities.

⁷⁴ 'Trott-Plaid Excused', *The London Evening Post* (28–30 July 1748), reprinted in *Henry Fielding: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by Ronald Paulson and Thomas Lockwood (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 145.

Chapter III. Comic Romance 'out of a Dunghill'

I am justly angry with that Parson, whose Family hath been raised from the Dunghill by ours.

Shamela

Thou art a low Creature, of the *Andrews* Breed, a Reptile of a lower Order, a Weed that grows in the common Garden of the Creation.

Joseph Andrews (IV. 6)

But suppose for Argument's sake we should admit that he had no Ancestors at all, but had sprung up, according to the modern Phrase, out of a Dunghill, as the *Athenians* pretended they themselves did from the Earth, would not this *Autokopros* have been justly entitled to all the Praise arising from his own Virtues? Would it not be hard, that a Man who hath no Ancestors should therefore be render'd incapable of acquiring Honour, when we see so many who have no Virtues, enjoying the Honour of their Forefathers?

Joseph Andrews (I. 2)

The so-called 'most cheerful of novels' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 341), *Joseph Andrews* was written in late 1741 and published in February 1742, when both personal and political prospects were anything but 'cheerful' for Fielding.¹ As recollected in the preface to *Miscellanies* in 1743, Fielding was, during the winter of 1741–42, 'laid up in the Gout, with a favourite Child dying in one Bed, and my Wife in a condition very little better, on another' (p. 14). To add to this distress, his finances could scarcely be worse, for he found himself, unable to repay twenty eight pounds odd, confined in a sponging house for a fortnight in March 1741.² According to Battestin, it was during this confinement that Fielding penned *Shamela* (*Life*, p. 304), in which, as we shall see later, he put Parson Williams to the same affliction.³ Obviously, none of Fielding's patrons were around to bail him out or lend him money (*Life*, p. 296).

¹ *Joseph Andrews*, ed. by Martin C. Battestin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), General Introduction, pp. xxvi–xxvii.. References to *Joseph Andrews* are to this edition and given in the text.

² Fielding was sued by one Hugh Allen on 27 February 1741 and sent to the sponging house on 6 March to remain there until 20 March, when he finally managed to secure four bails (Battestin, *Life*, pp. 295–96). The court judged him to clear the debt by 26 March 1742, when Fielding narrowly escaped being sent to the debtor's prison by borrowing money from one Joseph King (*Life*, p. 341). Soon after the publication of *Joseph Andrews* in February 1742, Horace Walpole was remarking, Fielding 'said to Mr. Winnington, I wish any Body would lend me five hundred pound upon my Life' (Coley, 'Henry Fielding and the Two Walpoles', p. 169).

³ *An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews*, in *Joseph Andrews and Shamela*, ed. by Douglas Brooks-Davies (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 313–57 (pp. 345–46). Further references are to this edition and given in the text.

Fielding was then justified in feeling unduly neglected by his closer patrons, not to mention other leaders of the opposition, as he would give vent to his exasperation months later in *The Opposition: A Vision* (15 December 1741). The ingratitude of the politicians crucially influenced his disenchantment with the opposition, especially as its leaders betrayed themselves in unequivocal pursuit of self-interest in the aftermath of Walpole's fall. Fielding had paid compliments to William Pulteney and John Carteret alongside other opposition leaders in 'Of True Greatness' in January 1741,⁴ though within the opposition they had always been suspected of defection. A year later Pulteney and Carteret eventually ingratiated themselves with George II, the one entering the House of Lords as Earl of Bath and the other made Secretary of State in support of Hanoverian interests.⁵

As briefly mentioned in the preceding chapter, such was Fielding's disillusion at this juncture that he added a chapter (IV. 3) out of context in *Jonathan Wild*, to reenact the farce of political betrayal in early 1742. But its impact appears all but radical in *Shamela* and *Joseph Andrews*, where Fielding's biting satire of the great or 'High People' (*Joseph Andrews*, II. 13, p. 156) attains a particularly anti-authoritarian verve in conjunction with his sympathy with 'Low People', his anxious awareness that he as author belongs with them. Even in *Shamela*, Fielding's attitude towards the heroine or Parson Williams is not so simply vituperative as it is usually believed, in so far as he conspires with them to lay open the impotence of Squire Booby, emblematic of the bankruptcy of paternalist authority in 'High People', and Parson Williams's status as disaffected incumbent is specifically analogous to Fielding's as disaffected author. The landscape of *Joseph Andrews* is a lot more populous with

⁴ Pulteney in the 1741 preface to 'Of True Greatness': 'An *Argyle*, a *Chesterfield*, a *Dodington*, a *Pulteney*, a *Lyttleton*, the brightest Characters must be sullied in Revenge; but alas! the Reverse of their Design hath happened, instead of blackening such Characters, their Ink hath contracted a Whiteness from them, and ever since whitens all those it is cast on' (*Miscellanies; Volume One*, Appendix A, p. 248); and Carteret in the poem:

Greatness with Learning deck'd in *Carteret* see, [...]
In *Chesterfield* to ripe Perfection come,
See it in *Lyttleton* beyond its Bloom. (259, 261)

⁵ See Cleary, pp. 163–68, Battestin, *Life*, pp. 336–37, and Goldgar, pp. 186–88.

failed authorities, in the form of defunct or deficient fathers, parsons, justices, and squires. In this regard, Parson Adams's ambiguous status as at once alternative authority to Joseph and other parishioners and 'a kind of Domestic only' (I. 3, p. 25) in the eyes of the Boobys, also reflects Fielding's concern about the complex relations between authors and authorities and subsequent limitations on authors. Unlike Parson Williams, Adams is more than just an analogue, for he is an author (of yet unpublished sermons) in his own right. As a whole, *Joseph Andrews* is Fielding's most pungent criticism of 'High People', informed by his most positive alignment with 'Low People' in conjunction with his implied portrayal of an author as footman or 'Domestic' to the great, to whom the Boobys would only refer as the 'Reptile of a lower Order' (IV. 6, p. 298), 'The Brutes' (I. 3, p. 25), or the 'Dunghill' breed. In reaction, Fielding deliberately leans on the imagery of animality and virility encoded in plebeian culture, especially in its rural setting, to expose the lifelessness and impotence of the *beau monde*. Just as vagrancy confers freedom on Joseph and Parson Adams, as well as bringing them to hazardous 'Adventures', so Fielding's disillusioned estrangement from the great allows him to imagine and define the as yet unattempted 'comic Romance' of 'Low People'.

1. Failure of Authority (1): *Shamela*

In discussions of the parodic departures of *Shamela* from *Pamela*, it is seldom recognised that unlike in *Pamela*, the father of the heroine is totally insignificant in *Shamela*. In Richardson's novel, Pamela's letters are usually addressed to her 'Parents', even though their function is scarcely more than to sustain the epistolary convention, and it is always her father, perhaps because her mother is illiterate, who answers Pamela's letters, comforting and encouraging his distressed daughter.⁶ In *Shamela*, though, Mrs. Andrews takes the place of Pamela's father as

⁶ See Samuel Richardson, *Pamela*, ed. by Peter Sabor (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980), Letters II, XIII, and XVII.

Pamela/Shamela's sole correspondent. Never mentioned in the correspondence proper, Mr. Andrews's stormy career is given a summary account in Parson Oliver's letter to Parson Tickletext:

Her father had in his Youth the Misfortune to appear in no good Light at the *Old-Baily*; he afterwards served in the Capacity of a Drummer in one of the *Scotch* Regiments in the *Dutch Service*; where being drummed out, he came over to *England*, and turned Informer against several Persons on the late Gin-Act; and becoming acquainted with a Hostler at an Inn, where a *Scotch* Gentleman's Horse stood, he hath at last by his Interest obtain'd a pretty snug Place in the *Custom-House*. (p. 325)

Mr. Andrews even remains nameless, while Mrs. Andrews is given a long mock-archaic name, 'Henrietta Maria Honora Andrews', like the Snap sisters, Lætitia and Theodosia, in *Jonathan Wild*. This totally absent Mr. Andrews aptly prefigures the indifferent 'Gaffar Andrews' in *Joseph Andrews*, 'a comical sly old fellow' (IV. 15, p. 338), whose only appearance in the novel features him showing 'no remarkable Emotion' at the revelation that Fanny, not Joseph, is his real child, as he is more concerned for 'his Pipe, not having had a Whiff that Morning' (IV. 16, pp. 339–40). Furthermore, his displacement by Mrs. Andrews anticipates Lady Booby's take-over of the estate from the defunct Squire Booby and subsequent loosening of disorder in *Joseph Andrews*.

The profession of Shamela's mother is easily inferable from the very first letter from Shamela to her, where, in open subversion of the piety of *Pamela*, the language and ethos of the brothel underworld in *The Covent-Garden Tragedy* are revived.

SHAMELA ANDREWS to Mrs. HENRIETTA MARIA HONORA ANDREWS at her Lodgings at the Fan and Pepper-Box in Drury Lane.

Dear Mamma,

This comes to acquaint you, that I shall set out in the Waggon on *Monday*, desiring you to commodate me with a Ludgin, as near you as possible, in *Coulstin's-Court*, or *Wild-Street*, or somewhere thereabouts; pray let it be handsome, and not above two Stories high: For Parson *Williams* hath promised to visit me when he comes to Town, [...] and I beleve Mrs. *Jervis* will come along with me, for she says she would like to keep a House somewhere about *Short's-Gardens*, or towards *Queen-Street*; and if there was

convenience for a Bannio she should like it the better.
(pp. 325–26)

Like ‘Mother Punchbowl’ in *The Covent-Garden Tragedy*, the ‘mother’ in *Shamela* is a bawd by profession and soon proves herself as such with her actual instructions to Shamela, to the effect that she ‘should take care to be well paid before-hand’ and to make ‘a good Market’ of her person in her dealings with Squire Booby (p. 328). Mrs. Andrews, as Parson Oliver reveals to the deluded Parson Tickletext, ‘sold Oranges in the Play-House’ (p. 325), which is an euphemism for prostitution, and now stays ‘at her Lodgings at the Fan and Pepper-Box in Drury Lane’, a region as notorious as Covent Garden for brothels.⁷ Mrs. Jervis is also of the same kind as Mrs. Andrews, judging from her plan to ‘keep a House’ or a ‘Bannio’ (Shamela’s spelling of ‘bagnio’) mentioned in this letter, and virtually becomes a surrogate for the absent mother-bawd at Booby’s. The same part is to be played by Mrs. Jewkes, after Shamela’s removal to Lincolnshire.

With such parentage, Shamela is the sole mistress of herself, and the following exchange between mother and daughter vividly reveals the total lack of parental authority in *Shamela*:

Henrietta Maria Honora Andrews to Shamela Andrews.

Dear Sham,

Your last Letter hath put me into a great hurry of Spirits, for you have a very difficult Part to act. I hope you will remember your Slip with Parson *Williams*, and not be guilty of any more such Folly. Truly, a Girl who hath once known what is what, is in the highest Degree inexcusable if she respects her *Digressions*; but a Hint of this is sufficient. [...]

SHAMELA ANDREWS to HENRIETTA MARIA HONORA ANDREWS.

⁷ Brooks-Davies refers to the slangy meaning of ‘orange’ as the ‘female pudend’ (p. 389n) and explains that both ‘cunny’ and ‘fanny’ connote female sexual organs, too, in the first name of the imaginary author of *Shamela*, ‘Conney Keyber’ (i.e. Colley Cibber), and the name of his dedicatee ‘Fanny’ (i.e. John, Lord Hervey) (p. 387). He also annotates to the ‘Fan and Pepper-Box’ in Shamela’s letter that the phrase hints at ‘fanny’ and ‘peppered’, that is, ‘infected with the venereal disease’ (p. 389n).

Marry come up, good Madam, the Mother had never looked into the Oven for her Daughter, if she had not been there herself. I shall never have done if you upbraid me with having had a small One by *Arthur Williams*, when you yourself—but I say no more. *O! What fine Times when the Kettle calls the Pot.* Let me do what I will, I say my Prayers as often as another, and I read in good Books, as often as I have Leisure; and Parson *William* says, that will make amends. (p. 327)

Shamela's taunting rejoinder to her mother makes it clear that she will not be ruled by anybody but by her own will: 'Let me do what I will'. Indeed Shamela seems to contest parental guidance on the authority of what 'Parson Williams says', which brings in the question of the role of the clergy in *Shamela*. In fact, the same question lies at the heart of Fielding's concern in *Shamela*, as is manifest from the framing correspondence between Parsons Tickletext and Oliver. If Parson Tickletext's 'emotional' bewitchment by 'sweet, dear, pretty *Pamela*' (p. 321) implies the clergy's failure to provide right moral guidance for their flock, Parson Williams's carnal relationship with Shamela more fully dramatises the débâcle of the ecclesiastical authority. Thus Shamela's spiritual father (or rather husband, as he puts it himself) turns out no better than her flesh-and-blood father.

Apparently, the 'charming' Parson Williams, 'full of a great deal of Learning' and 'able to talk Latin' (p. 334), captivates Shamela to such an extent that she becomes a most faithful follower of his teachings. Thus Shamela often reports Williams's sermons with admiration, as in the following letter:

Well, on *Sunday* Parson *Williams* came, according to his Promise, and an excellent Sermon he preached; his Text was, *Be not Righteous over-much*; and, indeed, he handled it in a very fine way; he shewed us that the Bible doth not require too much Goodness of us, and that People very often call things Goodness that are not so. That to go to Church, and to pray, and to sing Psalms, and to honour the Clergy, and to repent, is true Religion; and 'tis not doing good to one another, for that is one of the greatest Sins we can commit, when we don't do it for the sake of Religion. That those People who talk of Vartue and Morality, are the wickedest of all Persons. That 'tis not what we do, but what we believe, that must save us, and a great many other good Things; I wish I could remember them all. (p. 336)

On a later occasion, after Shamela's marriage to Squire Booby, Parson Williams 'very learnedly' delivers to her a private sermon on two kinds of husband, one of the flesh and the other of the spirit: 'as then the Spirit is preferable to the Flesh, so am I preferable to your other Husband, to whom I am antecedent in Time likewise' (p. 351). As a conclusion, Williams says to Shamela, 'I say these things, my dear, [...] to satisfie your Conscience', to which Shamela instantly replies: 'A Fig for my Conscience, [...] when shall I meet you again in the Garden?' (p. 351). Shamela's impatient rejoinder here effectively subverts Parson Williams's 'learned' moralising, thus exposing his bogus authority. After all, 'that is not the most charming Thing belonging to him' (p. 335). Far from a spiritual father or the husband of 'the Spirit', Parson Williams turns out to be more a husband of 'the Flesh' than Squire Booby.

Yet the epitome of failed authority depicted in *Shamela* ought to be Squire Booby. In the eyes of Mrs. Andrews and her daughter, he is, from the outset, merely 'a rich Fool' (p. 328), whose first appearance is described as follows:

Pamela, says he, (for so I am called here) you was a great Favourite of your late Mistress's; yes, an't please your Honour, says I; and I believe you deserved it, says he; thank your Honour for your good Opinion, says I; and then he took me by the Hand, and I pretended to be shy: Laud, says I, Sir, I hope you don't intend to be rude; no, says he, my Dear, and then he kissed me, 'till he took away my Breath—and I pretended to be Angry, and to get away, and then he kissed me again, and breathed very short, and looked very silly. (p. 326)

Booby's violent attempts upon Shamela's person always miscarry and end up with his looking 'very silly' and implicitly impotent. In this regard, Booby suffers the same fate as Wild, and also prefigures Beau Didapper in *Joseph Andrews*, whose first assault on Fanny yields a scene very similar to the above. 'Struck with Amazement' at the first sight of Fanny's face, Beau Didapper stops his horse, and

swore she was the most beautiful Creature he ever beheld. Then instantly alighting, and delivering his Horse to his Servant, he rapt out half a dozen Oaths that he would kiss her; to which she at first submitted, begging he would not be rude: but he was not satisfied with the Civility of a Salute, nor even with the rudest Attack he could make on her Lips, but caught her in his

Arms and endeavoured to kiss her Breasts, which with all her Strength she resisted; and as our Spark was not of the Herculean Race, with some difficulty prevented. The young Gentleman being soon out of breath in the Struggle, quitted her. (IV. 7, p. 303)

Booby is 'not of the Herculean Race', either, so that he fails to have Shamela even with the help of Mrs. Jewkes in the second bed-scuffle (pp. 340–41). His impotence is so frustrating that even his accessory Mrs. Jewkes cries to him, 'Why don't you do it? I have one Arm secure, if you can't deal with the rest I am sorry for you' (p. 341).

A more fully detailed farce is enacted in the first bed-scuffle (pp. 330–31), where Booby meets with the same 'bloody' fiasco as often befalls to Wild.

Thursday Night, Twelve o'Clock.

Mrs. *Jervis* and I are just in Bed, and the Door unlocked; if my Master should come—Odsbobs! I hear him just coming in at the Door. You see I write in the present Tense, as Parson *Williams* says. Well, he is in Bed between us, we both shamming a Sleep, he steals his Hand into my Bosom, which I, as if in my Sleep, press close to me with mine, and then pretend to awake.—I no sooner see him, but I scream out to Mrs. *Jervis*, she feigns likewise but just to come to herself; we both begin, she to becall, and I to bescratch very liberally. (p. 330)

In addition to his physical awkwardness, Booby's total blindness to Shamela's histrionic dances constantly subjects him to her imposition. 'Having made a pretty free Use of [her] Fingers', Shamela feigns 'a Swoon', to his utter confusion.

The poor Booby frightened out of his Wits, jumped out of Bed, and in his Shirt, sat down by my Bed-Side, pale and trembling [...].

The Squire who had sat all this While speechless, and was almost really in that Condition, which I feigned, the Moment he saw me give Symptoms of recovering my Senses, fell down on his Knees; and O *Pamela*, cried he, can you forgive me, my injured Maid? by Heaven, I know not whether you are a Man or a Woman, unless by your swelling Breasts. Will you promise to forgive me: I forgive you! D—n you (says I) and d—you, says he, if you come to that. I wish I had never seen your bold Face, saucy Sow, and so went out of the Room. (pp. 330–31)

The felicitously mechanical exchange, 'D—n you (says I) and d—you, says he', is an unmistakable reminder of the mutual damnation of Wild and Lætitia in the Newgate

scene (IV. 2, p. 171). By the time that exchange brings the farce to an end, Squire Booby is seen exactly on the same footing with Shamela. His impotent fury finds no vent but in verbal violence, which in effect levels him with the mighty swearer Shamela. The 'Master' provokes the ridicule of his servants, who on his leaving 'burst into a violent Laugh' (p. 331).

As hinted above, Squire Booby's progress in *Shamela* is comparable to Wild's, in terms of his inadequacy in dealing with Shamela, similar to Wild's humiliation after humiliation by every woman he approaches. Like Wild, too, Booby remains unaware until the very last moment that he is all along being outwitted by Shamela and Parson Williams, both before and after marriage. Thus *Shamela* ends with a seemingly casual postscript by the now enlightened Parson Tickletext, about 'a certain Account, that Mr. Booby hath caught his Wife in bed with Williams; hath turned her off, and is prosecuting him in the spiritual Court' (p. 357), which reminds us of Wild's catching 'Fireblood in the Arms of his lovely Lætitia' (IV. 11, p. 230). Yet we notice a significant difference between their reactions, for whereas Wild, initiating a hearty 'Box on the Ear', falls to a boxing bout with his rival, Squire Booby takes a typically genteel step in resorting to the court. In this regard, Booby again prefigures Beau Didapper, who, on incurring Joseph's Herculean 'Box on the Ear' while trying to dally with Fanny, draws his hanger, instead of returning the box with his own (IV. 11). This incident, as I will demonstrate in detail later, implicitly points to Didapper's genteel privilege of carrying weaponry in contrast to Adams's makeshift shield of the 'Lid of a Pot' and such vulgar forms of combating as boxing or cudgel-playing, in which both his rival Joseph and Parson Adams are well adept. Didapper's display of his privilege, though, only helps disclose his inherent impotence more effectively, and in this context, Squire Booby's recourse to the law, probably because he is sure of the law being on his side, should be regarded as a similar revelation.

The denouement is but a finalising illustration of Booby's genteel impotence, which has been steadily accentuated from the beginning, especially in contrast to Parson Williams's implied virility, to which Shamela alludes frequently.

O! what a devilish Thing it is, for a Woman to be obliged to go to Bed to a spindle-shanked young Squire, she doth not like, when there is a jolly Parson in the same House she is fond of. (p. 353)

Far from commendable in any respect, Parson Williams is a 'jolly Parson', sexually potent and fond of hunting (pp. 349–50) and drinking and smoking (p. 353), representing a subversive foil to the 'spindle-shanked young Squire'. Concerning his subversive potential, it is essential to note that Williams is not only a social inferior to Squire Booby but directly dependent on Booby's favour for his employment in the parish. Thus Squire Booby exhibits peremptory displeasure on seeing Williams hunting in his demesne:

I am justly angry with that Parson, whose Family hath been raised from the Dunghill by ours; and who hath received from me twenty Kindnesses, and yet not contented to destroy the Game in all other Places, which I freely give him leave to do; but hath the Impudence to pursue a few Hares, which I am desirous to preserve, round about this little Coppice. (p. 350)

What is really at issue between them is therefore not so much a matter of sexual contention as a disguised class strife. Thus the liaison between the parson 'from the Dunghill' and the servant girl conceals a sardonic scoff at the potency of their master. The vocabulary of class distinction and social hierarchy is thwarted by Shamela's sexual puns, so that the 'great Man' in *Shamela* is Parson Williams (p. 346): 'O Parson Williams, how little are all the Men in the World compared to thee' (p. 341). Thus Parson Williams and Shamela 'make a charming Fool' and a 'little' man of the squire, and the master-servant relationship is turned topsy-turvy, as is clear from Shamela's assurance to her mother: 'Times are finely altered, I have entirely got the better of him, and am resolved never to give him his humour' (p. 352).

The class-based relationship between Booby and Williams bears further significance in *Shamela*. In Shamela's last letter before marriage, Williams is seen writing from the bailiff's, where, one letter says to Shamela, he was sent for a debt of

£150 to 'that Villain your Master', and the other, addressed to 'Honoured Sir', runs as follows:

I am justly surprized to feel so heavy a Weight of your Displeasure, without being conscious of the least Demerit towards so good and generous a Patron, as I have ever found you: For my own Part, I can truly say,

Nil conscire sibi nullæ pallescere culpæ.

And therefore, as this Proceeding is so contrary to your usual Goodness, which I have often experienced, and more especially in the Loan of this Money for which I am now arrested; I cannot avoid thinking some malicious Persons have insinuated false Suggestions against me; intending thereby, to eradicate those Seeds of Affection which I have hardly travailed to sow in your Heart, and which promised to produce such excellent Fruit. If I have any ways offended you, Sir, be graciously pleased to let me know it, and likewise to point out to me, the Means whereby I may reinstate myself in your Favour: For next to his whom the great themselves must bow down before, I know none to whom I shall bend with more Lowliness than your Honour. Permit me to subscribe my self,

Honoured Sir,

Your most obedient, and most obliged,

And most dutiful humble Servant,

ARTHUR WILLIAMS.

(pp. 345–46)⁸

Full of forced compliments to 'so good and generous a Patron', Williams's letter brings home his abject dependence on that patron. Now the 'great' man is the patron, to whom Williams is obliged to prostrate himself in fulsome obsequiousness, even though he is implicitly greater in 'Learning' (and virility as well). Shamela aptly expresses the frustration for Williams:

The Fate of poor Mr. *Williams* shocked me more than my own: For, as the *Beggar's Opera* says, *Nothing moves one so much as a great Man in Distress*. And to see a Man of his Learning forced to submit so low, to one whom I have often heard him say, he despises, is, I think, a most affecting Circumstance. (p. 346)

Negative attributes aside, one of Williams's most notable features constantly brought to our attention in *Shamela* is his 'Learning', of which the hallmark is his command of Latin, as displayed in his letter to Booby. In Fielding's fiction, a clergyman is

⁸ The Horatian citation means 'to be conscious of no wrong, to grow pale for no crime' (p. 391n).

always potentially analogous to an author, good or bad, considering the parallel role of the clergy to that of a 'great and good Writer' as guardian of morals in Fielding's ideal. The framing correspondence between Parsons Oliver and Tickletext in *Shamela* well illustrates this and at the same time underlines the failure of Parson Tickletext as moral guide. In the actual drama of each fiction, though, emphasis is laid on the clergy's attendance on their social superiors, for example, Williams's and Adams's on the Boobys or Parson Supple's on Squire Western in *Tom Jones*, in parallel to authors' on patrons. It is no wonder that the parson-patron relationship in *Shamela* is couched in the same tongue-in-cheek vocabulary of lowness v. greatness as we have remarked, for example, in the ironic polarisation of 'a low and Scholastic Character' against the Great Man in *Jonathan Wild*. A wickedly wishful reversal of this polarisation, in *Shamela*'s resentment on Williams's behalf, has already been noted.

As briefly mentioned earlier, Williams's detention at the bailiff's is a dramatisation of Fielding's own situation in March 1741, the period of the composition of *Shamela* (Battestin, *Life*, p. 304). Though not really sued by one of his patrons, Fielding may have been asking his suer to have compassion or his patrons to help him out or at least stand bail for him, in a situation not unlike Williams's, when he wrote: 'unless I can find Bail within these few Days, of which I see no likelihood, I shall be carried to Goal' (p. 345). As documented by Battestin, Fielding had real difficulty in procuring sufficiently creditable bails for the sum of thirty five pounds odd, while none of his patrons were offering any form of support (p. 296). Possibly, they were too preoccupied with their own business to attend to Fielding's hardship, for their anti-Walpole campaign was then in an impasse in the immediate aftermath of the embarrassing defeat of the 'Motion' for George II to dismiss Walpole from his presence in February.⁹ Whatever the reason, their disregard helped precipitate the

⁹ Samuel Sandys addressed the motion to the king, which the opposition, torn by internal feuds, failed to carry through in Parliament. The humiliating defeat marked the climax of opposition factionalism, causing serious damage to the opposition election campaign, and gave rise to a number of satirical prints (Goldgar, pp. 186–87, and Cleary, pp. 352–53). The best-known of them, titled 'The Motion', depicted 'Champion', with recognisable likeness to Fielding's appearance, as one of the drudging writers tied to the opposition wagon, which most certainly inspired Fielding with the like conception in his *Opposition: A Vision*.

distressed author into a prolonged encounter with the plain truth of the author-patron relationship in this critical period, affecting his fictional rendering of the relationship between Williams and Booby in *Shamela*. As glimpsed in the passing remark by Shamela, who often acts as spokeswoman for the parson in this regard, it is an interest-based relationship through and through, not an ostentation of munificence: 'as long as he hath a Vote for Pallamant-Men, the Squire dares do nothing to offend him' (p. 336). Then, Booby's haughty reference to his 'twenty Kindnesses' to the parson is hardly justified, and nor is his scornful bearing towards the incumbent, whose family he says 'hath been raised from the Dunghill' by his own. Still the incumbent is allowed no other measure to give vent to his exasperation but to confess secretly to Shamela as follows:

Indeed, a Contempt of the Clergy is the fashionable Vice of the Times; but let such Wretches know, they cannot hate, detest, and despise us, half so much as we do them. (p. 335)

By simply replacing the word 'Clergy' with 'authors', we can perceive 'Fielding's bitterness towards the class he felt had abandoned him' at its most caustic.¹⁰ It is not uncharacteristic of Fielding to assimilate himself with the butts of his satire, especially by infusing his own distressed situations into their potentially comic ones. Having seen Fielding's uncanny equation of himself with Pillage in *Eurydice Hissed*, we are not surprised to note Williams's semblance to the disaffected author Fielding in *Shamela*. Compared with Pillage's case, Williams's in *Shamela* seems to imply a shift in focus, in that it tentatively signals Fielding's move towards a more positive sympathy with 'Low People' in *Joseph Andrews*, to whom 'High People' like the Boobys scornfully refer as the 'Dunghill' breed. As we have remarked in the preceding chapter, Walpole is described as a 'Monster, who sprung up [...] out of a Dunghill' in *The Champion* (No. 131, 13 September 1740), which is related to the 'Hockelyan' origin of Jonathan Wild, too. In *Joseph Andrews*, Fielding's genuinely

¹⁰ William B. Coley, 'The Background of Fielding's Laughter', *ELH*, 26 (1959), 229–52 (p. 230).

sympathetic celebration of the footman hero and yet another incumbent, equally derived from the same 'Dunghill' in the eyes of Lady Booby, suggests that now he is not simply appropriating plebeian potentials for opposition purposes. In *Joseph Andrews*, we find Fielding's wholly reinvigorated criticism of patricians, in proportion to his sincerer sympathies with the 'low' characters, as appears in the following section.

2. Failure of Authority (2): *Joseph Andrews*

The dislocation of authority, drafted through the three deficient 'fathers' in *Shamela*, that is, Mr. Andrews, Parson Williams, and Squire Booby, is given a thorough account in *Joseph Andrews*. Lady Booby's replacement of the late Squire Booby at the outset of the plot proper in Book I anticipates the overall collapse of paternalism, as it will emerge through Books II and III, where the principal characters encounter a series of fathers, husbands, parsons, magistrates, and squires, hopelessly deserting their paternalist responsibilities. Despite their outer frivolity, these potentially disastrous encounters are not seldom informed with the gloomier aspects of the history of early eighteenth-century life, thus adding weight to the novel's social criticism. On Lady Booby's return to her parish at the beginning of Book IV, the inquiry into defunct paternalism in *Joseph Andrews* reaches its height, laying the fundamental indictment against 'High People' represented by Lady Booby and Beau Didapper, for causing the disrupted life of the lower orders recorded in *Joseph Andrews*.

First of all, the extent of Fielding's concern for fatherhood itself in *Joseph Andrews* is attested by the fact that the hero is given as many as three fathers, namely, Gaffar Andrews, Mr. Wilson, and Parson Adams, which in effect means that he is virtually fatherless. The paternity of either Wilson or Andrews is but nominal, the one unknown as Joseph's real father and the other all but totally unheard of until Joseph's history comes to an end. Like the nonentity Mr. Andrews in *Shamela*, Gaffar

Andrews is absent from most of Joseph's history, until his belated arrival in the penultimate chapter, to be told that Joseph is not his child. Mr. Andrews, 'a comical sly old Fellow' very likely to wish to 'have no more Children than he could keep', asks the peddler: 'Well, [...] you have proved, I think, very plainly that this Boy doth not belong to us; but how are you certain that the Girl is ours?' (IV. 15, p. 338). Thus he reveals no 'remarkable Emotion' at the greeting of his long-lost child Fanny, but pays more regard to his pipe (IV. 16, p. 340). The void is therefore to be filled by Parson Adams as surrogate father to Joseph, and for that matter, Adams is a father of six in his own right, besides being the spiritual father to his parishioners. The nature of Adams's fatherhood and its implications will be discussed towards the end of this section.

The factual or virtual fatherlessness of protagonists is one of the characteristic phenomena in many early eighteenth-century novels, as James Cruise argues.¹¹ Yet Cruise's claim that their absent fathers 'prepared the way for a new guard of sons and daughters' to prosper 'in ways that their fathers had not' (p. 254) needs qualifying in Fielding's novels, especially in *Joseph Andrews*, where as often as not the absence or failure of fathers turns out to be the implicit cause of the unruly and eventually ruinous life of their children. In the 'History of Leonora' (II. 4 and 6), for instance, it is implied that Leonora's tragedy results from her want of proper paternal guidance. Leonora is seen living with her townly aunt, while her father, simply referred to as a 'Gentleman of Fortune' at the beginning (II. 4, p. 102), remains absent from her life, until his appearance at the very end as follows:

He was, to say the truth, one of those Fathers who look on Children as an unhappy Consequence of their youthful Pleasures; which as he would have been delighted not to have had attended them, so was he no less pleased with any opportunity to rid himself of the Incumbrance. He pass'd in the World's Language as an exceeding good Father, being not only so rapacious as to rob and plunder all Mankind to the utmost of his power, but even to deny himself

¹¹ Cruise offers a reading of *Joseph Andrews* in terms of Fielding's reflections therein upon the relationship between the diminution of patriarchal authority and the rise of self-directing and commercially venturesome 'sons and daughters': 'Fielding, Authority, and the New Commercialism in *Joseph Andrews*', *English Literary History*, 54 (1987), 253–76.

the Conveniencies and almost Necessaries of Life; which his Neighbours attributed to a desire of raising immense Fortunes for his Children: but in fact it was not so, he heaped up the Money for its own sake only, and looked on his Children as his Rivals, who were to enjoy his beloved Mistress, when he was incapable of possessing her, and which he would have been much more charmed with the Power of carrying along with him. (II. 6, pp. 126–27)

This belated introduction of Leonora's father is followed by the arrival of Leonora's fortune-hunting lover Bellarmine to make marriage settlements with the father. Given their common intention to plunder each other under the guise of marriage settlements, the scene of hypocritical altercations brings about nothing but Bellarmine's desertion of Leonora. The revelation of Leonora's having such a father provides the reader with a different perspective from before, in which the whole story is to be recollected. Now Leonora's father, not simply neglectful but willing to use his daughter to his own interest, is rightly called to account. Yet it is not only failed fathers like Leonora's that bring disaster into the life of children. 'My Father died when I was sixteen,' says Mr. Wilson, 'and left me Master of myself' (III. 3, p. 202). The premature death of his father led to his 'early Introduction into Life without a Guide', to which Wilson imputes 'all my future Misfortunes' (p. 202).

With regard to the absent or failed fathers in Fielding's fiction, critics at times take into account Fielding's troubled relationship with his father Edmund Fielding. He was very much an absent father, for Fielding 'had very little of his father's company' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 16). Besides, Edmund's dissipated way of life plus three more marriages after the death of Fielding's mother brought to nothing Fielding's great expectations as his eldest son and heir. In particular, Edmund's fourth and last marriage in March 1741, three months before his death, destroyed Fielding's chances of inheriting his father's patrimony, which occasioned Fielding's resentment in *The Crisis: A Sermon* (April 1741) as follows: 'The Power of Fatherhood is the Power of Preservation, not Destruction. Let him look to it, who squanders the Patrimony left him by his fathers, and entails Beggary upon his [Posterity]' (cited in Battestin, *Life*,

p. 300).¹² Though such bitterness, according to Battestin, gave way to 'kindlier feelings' soon after Edmund's death, Fielding's feelings towards his father remained complex and ambivalent, as appears from his rendering of the failed fathers and their disregarded children in his fiction.

Though possibly influenced by his personal feelings towards his own father, Fielding's portrayal of failed fathers in *Joseph Andrews* seems to me to have more to do with his political disenchantment with the so-called patrician class he was reduced to depending on and felt 'abandoned' by. Thus Fielding's reflections on paternal failure in *Joseph Andrews* more often than not enfold an indictment of authorities in public life. His delineation of failed husbands reveals the same tendency. Like the failed father, the failed husband, whether a hen-pecked poltroon like Mr. Tow-wouse or a bullying tyrant like Parson Trulliber, embodies matrimonial disorder.¹³ Thus the import of Fielding's lengthy description of Mrs. Trulliber's submission to her husband's 'Greatness' is not limited to Parson Trulliber's domestic misrule.

Indeed she was so absolute an Admirer of her Husband's Greatness and Importance, of which she had frequent Hints from his own Mouth, that she almost carried her Adoration to an opinion of his Infallibility. To say the truth, the Parson had exercised her more ways than one; and the pious Woman had so well edified by her Husband's Sermons, that she had resolved to receive the good things of this World together with the bad. She had indeed been at first a little contentious; but he had long since got the better, partly by her love for *this*, partly by her fear of *that*, partly by her Religion, partly by the Respect he paid himself, and partly by that which he received from the Parish: She had, in short, absolutely submitted, and now worshipped her Husband as *Sarah* did *Abraham*, calling him (not Lord but) Master. Whilst they were at Table, her Husband gave her a fresh Example of his Greatness; for as she had just delivered a Cup of Ale to *Adams*, he snatched it out of his Hand, and crying out, *I caal'd vurst*, swallowed down the Ale. *Adams* denied it, and it was referred to the Wife, who tho' her Conscience was on the side of *Adams*, durst not give it against her Husband. Upon which he said, 'No, Sir, no, I should not have been so rude to have taken it from you, if you had *caal'd vurst*; but I'd

¹² According to Battestin, Fielding's enemies took advantage of sentiments like this to denigrate Fielding as having been impious to his late father (pp. 300–01). Fielding's troubled relationship with his father is briefly mentioned by Hunter (p. 139) and McCrea (p. 48), too.

¹³ The wife over husband, as illustrated by Donaldson, is indeed one of the timeless stock characters in the '*mundus inversus*' of comedy, where the established order in the relation of ruled to ruler is suspended or inverted (pp. 13–15). However, even this stock comic situation was given political currency by opposition propaganda, which made it commonplace to mock George II as hen-pecked by Queen Caroline, informing, for example, Fielding's raillery of the royal family in *The Welsh Opera* and its suppressed revision *The Grub-Street Opera* in 1731.

have you know I'm a better Man than to suffer the best He in the Kingdom to drink before me in my own House, when I *caale vurst*.' (II. 14, pp. 164–65)

Words like 'Greatness', 'Adoration', 'Infallibility', remind us of the typical vocabulary of *Jonathan Wild*, hinting at another allegory of the 'Great Man' underneath the petty, hog-dealing parson. The allusion to Abraham, too, implicitly extends the import of the Trulliber episode, because of the time-honoured recognition of Abraham as the archetypal 'patriarch, a leader of his people' (Hunter, p. 111), which is even more important in the characterisation of Parson 'Abraham' Adams.¹⁴ What is at issue is not simply Trulliber's authority as husband. 'By his Professions of Piety, by his Gravity, Austerity, Reserve, and the Opinion of his great Wealth', Trulliber passes for 'so great an Authority in his parish' that the whole neighbourhood, like Mrs. Trulliber, live 'in the utmost Fear and Apprehension of him' (II. 15, p. 169). Trulliber's failure as an authority glances at that of greater authorities in society.

The fact that Trulliber is a parson by vocation assigns further significance to his character in *Joseph Andrews* and helps make clearer the nature of his failure. He is 'a Parson on Sundays, but the other six might more properly be called a Farmer' (II. 14, p. 162),¹⁵ and it is in the latter capacity that Adams finds him: 'Parson Adams came to the House of Parson Trulliber, whom he found stript into his Waistcoat, with an Apron on, and a Pail in his Hand, just come from serving his Hogs' (p. 162). By 'serving his Hogs', instead of his human flock, Parson Trulliber reveals his pursuit of self-interest, his own greed as well as 'his own Size being [...] little inferior to that of the Beasts' he deals in. In denying charity to Adams, Trulliber says, 'I know what Charity is, better than to give to Vagabonds' (p. 167), anticipating Lady Booby's relentlessly uncharitable bearing towards the poor (IV. 2, 3). By implication, his parishioners are left without pastoral care by the self-serving parson, whom Adams

¹⁴ Hunter gives an account of the contemporary deist controversy, centred on the biblical Abraham and Joseph, and its particular relevance to *Joseph Andrews* (pp. 101–05).

¹⁵ It was forbidden by law (21 Henry VIII, cap. 13), Battestin explains, for the clergy 'to take lands to farm or to buy and sell in markets' (*Joseph Andrews*, p. 162n).

rightly feels 'sorry to see [...] in Orders' (p. 168). Condemnable in its own right, Trulliber's failure to live up to his pastoral responsibility subtly calls attention to the greater failure in the patrician class represented by the Boobys. Yet the failure of one 'Country Priest' is to be distinguished from that of the great gentry, which will be properly defined when we come to discuss Lady Booby afterwards.

Civic authorities are no more backward than their spiritual counterparts in neglecting their duties. For example, the Justice of the Peace, before whom Adams and Fanny are brought, falsely accused as highwaymen by Fanny's attempted rapist (II. 11), turns out to be as keen a pleasure-seeker as Parson Trulliber is a pursuer of self-interest, and unscrupulous to turn justice into 'good Sport'.

The Justice, who was just returned from a Fox-Chace, and had not yet finished his Dinner, ordered them to carry the Prisoners into the Stable, whither they were attended by all the Servants in the House, and all the People of the Neighbourhood, who flock'd together to see them with as much Curiosity as if there was something uncommon to be seen, or that a Rogue did not look like other People.

The Justice being now in the height of his Mirth and his Cups, bethought himself of the Prisoners, and telling his Company he believed they should have good Sport in their Examination, he ordered them into his Presence. They had no sooner entered the Room, than he began to revile them, saying, 'that Robberies on the Highway were now grown so frequent, that People could not sleep safely in their Beds, and assured them they both should be made Examples of at the ensuing Assizes.' (p. 145)

While the image of 'all the People of the Neighbourhood' curiously 'flocking' to this court or theatre of justice seems to suggest their mobbish or rather childish quality in want of guidance and protection, the Justice's manner of conducting his office is a revealing let-down. To him, the alleged criminals simply mean a stock for 'good Sport' after dinner. Yet it is not simply his uncomprehending inhumanity towards them that disqualifies him from magistracy. Not to mention his ignorance of the law, his lack of learning is such that, on detecting 'Ciphers' in Adams's *Æschylus*, the Justice of the Peace suspects that 'this Fellow may be more than a common Robber, he may be in a Plot against the Government' (p. 148). In fact, his suspicion of Adams's implication with the Jacobites is a significant reference to contemporary

prosecutions of the highwaymen called 'Blacks' as Jacobites, which E. P. Thompson shows served the interests of Walpole and other Hanoverian ministers.¹⁶ Likewise, the Justice's closing complaint about the increasing 'Robberies on the Highway' and threat to make 'Examples' of Adams and Fanny seem to echo the sentiments of Lord Chief Justice in commenting upon the 'degeneracy of the present times' and the value of such 'good new laws' as the Black Act.

The degeneracy of the present times, fruitful in the inventions of wickedness, hath produced many new laws necessary for the present state and condition of things and to suppress mischiefs, which were growing frequent among us.
(Thompson, pp. 210–11)

This is the kind of justice that is capable of transporting, 'for robbing a Hen-roost', the good-natured postillion who gives away 'his only Garment' to the freezing Joseph, stripped by robbers, while all his betters will not (I. 12, p. 53).

We have another example of misguided magistracy in the court of the aptly named 'Justice Frolick' (IV. 3, p. 285). Justice Frolick, in charge of Lady Booby's parish, is brought to her attention by her lawyer, named 'Scout', as one who 'will stretch [the law] as far as he is able, to oblige your Ladyship' (p. 285). Here Scout happens to be revealing the truth concerning one important aspect of magistracy. The Justice of the Peace is obliged to serve the interests of Lady Booby, in so far as his own depend on her favour. Now the failure of magistracy is seen in a broader social context, implicated in class hegemony within eighteenth-century squirearchy. Accusations against the inadequacy of authorities in *Joseph Andrews* are always class-based, and eventually, pointing upwards at Lady Booby and her order.

By no coincidence, one particularly eloquent example of such accusations is found in the course of Joseph's 'Moral Reflections' on the failings of the 'great Folks' (III. 6).

¹⁶ See *Whigs and Hunters: The Origin of the Black Act* (London: Allen Lane, 1975; repr. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990), esp. Ch. 9.

I have often wondered [...] to observe so few Instances of Charity among Mankind [...]. Now would not one great Act of Charity, one Instance of redeeming a poor Family from all the Miseries of Poverty, restoring an unfortunate Tradesman by a Sum of Money to the means of procuring a Livelihood by his Industry, discharging an undone Debtor from his Debts or a Goal, or any such like Example of Goodness, create a Man more Honour and Respect than he could acquire by the finest House, Furniture, Pictures or Clothes that were ever beheld? [...] These great Folks are mistaken, if they imagine they get any Honour at all by these means [...]. Indeed it is strange that all Men should consent in commending Goodness, and no Man endeavour to deserve that Commendation; whilst, on the contrary, all rail at Wickedness, and all are as eager to be what they abuse. This I know not the Reason of, but it is as plain as Daylight to those who converse in the World, as I have done these three Years. (pp. 233–34)

As I will explain in a later section, Joseph's 'Reflections' tell us a lot of Fielding's own views on his dependence on disregarding patrons. In particular, he had recently felt their unconcern for 'discharging an undone Debtor from his Debts or a Goal'. In *Joseph Andrews*, criticisms of the 'great Folks' are typically strengthened by similar intimations of emotional involvement on Fielding's part, and more importantly, delivered from the point of view of the footman Joseph and 'other Gentlemen in Livery', as is manifested in the present example. Joseph confirms the 'Wickedness' of the 'great Folks' with his 'authority' of three years' attendance on Lady Booby.

Joseph's critical reflections are not unqualified, for to Fanny's question, 'Are all the great Folks wicked then?', he replies that 'some Gentlemen of our Cloth report charitable Actions done by their Lords and Masters'. Yet it turns out too soon that 'wicked' squires are ubiquitously rampant, as the peaceful rest of Joseph and his company is shattered by the intrusion of the roasting squire and his attendants the very next moment. What follows is a scene of literal man-hunting by this 'great Hunter of Men' (p. 238). The roasting squire's brutalities to Joseph's company, plotted by his 'Poet' and executed by his other attendants, are extensively described over the rest of Book III. The roasting squire is not simply a negligent authority but

an utterly aggressive predator on the commonalty, one of those 'patrician banditti' in Thompson's words, followed by a band of parasitic attendants.¹⁷

If not so savagely predatory as the roasting squire, the squire of false promises in Book II, Chapters 16–17 turns out to have destroyed no fewer lives, as Adams learns from a publican in his neighbourhood of at least three tragic stories that end with 'a Sentence of Transportation', a death by grief and consumption, and a prostitution and death by the 'French distemper' in gaol respectively. The 'young Squire, the Son of the Lord of the Manor', in Wilson's neighbourhood, too, disrupts the Wilsons' otherwise happily retired life all of a sudden by savagely killing their dog. Wilson grieves that

he had done nothing to deserve this Usage: but his Father had too great a Fortune to contend with. That he was as absolute as any Tyrant in the Universe, and had killed all the Dogs, and taken away all the Guns in the Neighbourhood, and not only that, but he trampled down the Hedges, and rode over Corn and Gardens, with no more Regard than if they were the Highway.
(III. 4, p. 228)

What happens in Wilson's neighbourhood was in fact commonplace in the gentry's conflicts with poachers, which seriously affected the life of local farmers, too. The gentry refrained from nothing to safeguard their forests from poachers, and according to Frank McLynn, their gamekeepers, if not the squires themselves, rampaged around in the following manner .

The keepers' greatest weapon, however, was not their firepower but their right to search for the illegal 'engines of destruction': guns, dogs, nets, and snares. None of these items could be possessed legally except by landlords and keepers. Carrying search warrants, gamekeepers could swoop on the cottage of a suspected poacher and destroy all staff nets, wire snares, greyhounds and lurchers they found there. Needless to say, this increased the level of violence between keepers and poachers. The destruction of dogs was a particularly embittering experience. These were valuable animals, carefully bred and trained. Keepers, who were subject to routine threats and actual thrashings from the poachers, took a particular delight in despatching them. In one unsavoury scene in a Staffordshire ale house, a keeper who was struggling to

¹⁷ Of the roasting squire's background, it may be worth noting that there is a passing reference to his fatherless upbringing (III. 7, p. 244).

wrest a dog from eight women, cut its throat before they could rescue it. Usually keepers shot the hounds on the spot, but when the local JP thought that the community poachers needed to be taught a hard lesson, he would arrange for lurchers to be ritually hanged in mimicry of Tyburn.

(McLynn, p. 207)

The scene of Lady Booby's return to her parish 'after so long an Absence' poignantly sums up the state of the poor parishioners left untended by their 'Patroness'.

She entered the Parish amidst the ringing of Bells, and the Acclamations of the Poor, who were rejoiced to see their Patroness returned after so long an Absence, during which time all her Rents had been drafted to *London*, without a Shilling being spent among them, which tended not a little to their utter impoverishing; for if the Court would be severely missed in such a City as *London*, how much more must the Absence of a Person of great Fortune be felt in a little Country Village, for whose Inhabitants such a Family finds a constant Employment and Supply; and with the Offals of whose Table the infirm, aged, and infant Poor are abundantly fed, with a Generosity which hath scarce a visible Effect on their Benefactor's Pockets? (IV. 1, p. 277)

Instead of an amorous lady who shamelessly falls for her footman, Lady Booby duly appears a (failed) 'Patroness', one of the eighteenth-century absentee landowners whose 'Absence' from the parishes left the 'Poor' in such circumstances as sketched above. As I have argued at the beginning, Lady Booby stands for the general 'Absence' of the father in *Joseph Andrews*, since Squire Booby's death and replacement by Lady Booby at the outset. Though the squire was himself no good 'patron', judging from what is remembered of him in relation to Parson Adams, it is a secondary question. More than just an ingenious parodic device, the inversion of sex from Squire B. in *Pamela* to Lady Booby *Joseph Andrews* plays a crucial part in the novel's serious social commentary. Seen from the parishioners' point of view, as in the above excerpt, Lady Booby's infatuation with Joseph is in itself part of her social failure. In other words, her passion for Joseph is distinguished from Slipslop's, for she uses her class and power only to gratify her desire, while neglecting all the responsibilities that should accompany such power. In this perspective, Lady Booby is not unlike the positively predatory squires we have just remarked.

The 'Poor', who are jubilant at her sight in the above scene, are to be betrayed again, for back in her parish 'after so long an Absence', their 'Patroness' is only concerned to stop Joseph from marrying Fanny. Indeed Lady Booby pressurises Adams with the 'many great Obligations' he has to the Boobys and then an unambiguous threat: 'It is my Orders to you, that you publish these Banns no more; and if you dare, I will recommend it to your Master, the Doctor, to discard you from his Service' (IV. 2, p. 283). She fails with Adams, but nearly succeeds in having Justice Frolick 'stretch' the law to send the couple to Bridewell for larceny, that is, for cutting 'one Hassel-Twig, of the value [...] of three half pence, or thereabouts', when young Booby intervenes. It is in the course of all these threats and instigations that Lady Booby betrays her inhumanity towards the poor most flagrantly. With reference to Joseph and Fanny respectively, she remarks as follows:

He is a Vagabond, and he shall not settle here, and bring a Nest of Beggars into the Parish. (IV. 2, p. 282)

As to the Wench, I am resolved she shall not settle here; I will not suffer such Beauties as these to produce Children for us to keep. [...] these forward Creatures who run after Men, will always find some as forward as themselves: So that, to prevent the Increase of Beggars, we must get rid of her.

(IV. 3, pp. 285–86)

Lady Booby would not be displeased to have 'an Act to hang or transport half of them', as the ingratiating Lawyer Scout puts it for his patroness (p. 285). It is a given from the beginning of the novel that to Lady Booby, the lower orders are 'The Brutes' and nothing more (p. 25), and yet her 'get rid of them' attitude, thus emphatically repeated through Book IV, is rendered the more detestable for her betrayal of the welcome and yearnings of the poor parishioners, as depicted at the opening of the same book.

It is no coincidence that Lady Booby's reception is closely juxtaposed with the warm welcome Adams receives from his parishioners at his return.

But if their Interest inspired so publick a Joy into every Countenance, how much more forcibly did the Affection which they bore Parson *Adams* operate upon all who beheld his Return. They flocked about him like dutiful Children round an indulgent Parent, and vied with each other in Demonstrations of Duty and Love. The Parson on his side shook every one by the Hand, enquiring heartily after the Healths of all that were absent, of their Children and Relations, and exprest a Satisfaction in his Face, which nothing but Benevolence made happy by its Objects could infuse. (IV. 1, p. 277–78)

Abandoned by their inhumane ‘Patroness’, the poor parishioners turn to Adams ‘like dutiful Children’ for ‘Affection’ and ‘Benevolence’. Parson Adams takes upon himself the part of a father to all his flock as well as to Joseph and his own six children.¹⁸ Foil as he is to all absent or failed authorities in *Joseph Andrews*, Adams’s social status is peculiarly ambiguous, for he obviously belongs to the ‘inferior clergy’. Contemporary scoffers at the ‘Low humour’ of *Joseph Andrews* treated Adams explicitly on a level with the servant hero and heroine: ‘*Low Humour* [...] exprest, | in *Footman, Country Wench, and Country Priest*.’¹⁹ Malicious criticisms aside, Adams’s social standing can be more correctly identified as incumbent on the gentry, worth twenty three pounds a year, and looked upon ‘as a kind of Domestic only’ by his masters (p. 25). As we have seen in Lady Booby’s threat to Adams, he is one of those Lady Booby can easily ‘get rid of’.

To return, with this in mind, to the scene of his return to the parish, it is certain that Adams’s ‘Benevolence’ can hardly gratify the parishioners’ material wants any more than his own. All that he can and does offer is ‘Affection’ and ‘Love’, not ‘Interest’ or the material provisions which the great gentry like Lady Booby and those predatory squires fail to confer on the ‘Poor’. Despite his affectionate fatherhood and even devotion to the ‘Highest’, on whose authority he refuses to submit to Lady Booby’s ‘Orders’, the nature of Adams’s ‘alternative authority’ is problematised by

¹⁸ Thompson explains that one of the symptoms of the decline of paternalism in the eighteenth century was the fact that ‘active pastoral care’ was almost entirely left to parish parsons, while the Established Church and its priesthood, mostly from genteel backgrounds, failed to represent ‘an alternative authority’ to the secular (‘Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture’, p. 391).

¹⁹ ‘Trott Plaid Excused’, *The London Evening Post* (28–30 July 1748), quoted in Paulson and Lockwood, *Henry Fielding: The Critical Heritage*, p. 145. See also Frederic T. Blanchard, *Fielding the Novelist: A Study in Historical Criticism* (New York: Russel and Russel, 1926), pp. 19–23.

his social standing and poverty. Not to mention occasional indications that his authority over Joseph or within his household is hardly absolute or unquestioned, Adams's frequent involvements in all kinds of physical and often 'bloody' humiliations complicate the characterisation of Adams as 'alternative authority' in *Joseph Andrews*. For example, the various horse-plays that befall to Parson Adams could scarcely happen to Allworthy in *Tom Jones*. With regard to this, Claude Rawson suggests that Fielding's class-consciousness intervenes in his different approaches to Adams and Allworthy, the former affected by his 'patronizing *hauteur*' (Rawson, Ch. 7). Rawson's 'hauteur' theory, though, works particularly ill in *Joseph Andrews*, where such is Fielding's distrust of failed authorities that the only father-figure is found among the 'Reptile' order, whose role is not so much to restore authority as to join the campaign against the failure of authority.

3. 'The Brutes'

It is typical of the great in *Joseph Andrews* to look down upon 'Low People' as sub-human orders, as is exemplified by Lady Booby, who 'never spoke of any of her Country Neighbours, by any other Appellation than that of *The Brutes*' (I. 3, p. 25). Likewise, Lady Booby refers to 'the Andrews breed' as 'a Reptile of a lower Order' (IV. 6, p. 298) and the Adamases as '*Quelle Bête! Quel Animal!*' (IV. 9, p. 313). However, such contumely is constantly thwarted in *Joseph Andrews*, where the critique of 'High People' is constructed along the novel's calculated translation of the animality of 'Low People' into positive contexts, so that their animal life exuberant in natural vigour contrasts with the fashionable life of 'High People', which Adams says 'is below the Life of an Animal, hardly above Vegetation' (III. 3, pp. 204–05).

Indeed popular or plebeian culture, in any period of history, tends to express itself in natural images or symbols, in which anti-authoritarian potential is inherent. Of post-Restoration plebeian culture in particular, Thompson notes 'a general and sometimes exuberant revival of popular sports, wakes, rush bearings and rituals' in

accordance with the 'legend of the revival of "merry England" after the Restoration', of which the 'maypole' rendered the central emblem ('Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture', p. 393). Naturally the maypole represented spring, rebirth, fertility, virility, youth, and such like, and could turn, when necessary, a potent symbol of insurrection against oppression of any sort, as it did in what Thompson defines as the 'anti-theatre' of eighteenth-century plebs. Their anti-establishment, anti-authoritarian potential particularly informed the 'crowd ritual' in both Jacobite and Wilkite risings in the first and second half of the century respectively.

The crowd, to judge by its origins, is characterized by its youth and maleness; its animus against old age, as carnival against Lent, is focused against the tyranny of the old master or father. It is perhaps useful to recall that, in imagery at least, revolutions (e.g., the French) have usually seen themselves as a force of energy embodied in sexually potent male youth.²⁰

Along with this increasing expressiveness of 'sexually potent male youth' in popular politics, 'the aspect of youth', Paulson argues, 'is becoming more interesting and central—more serious, more analyzed—than it had been in the genre of comedy *per se*, and also more significantly related to the low and popular' in books, including novels, published around the mid-century (p. 186).

Joseph is rightly a 'sexually potent male youth' with distinct anti-authoritarian appeals germane to the critique of failed authorities in *Joseph Andrews*. In a way, he can be more properly understood as such than Tom Jones, for his characteristic entrenchment in 'the low and popular' remains uninstitutionalised by any degree of genteel education. As revealed in his introduction, Joseph is by ancestry related to an 'excellent Cudgel-player' and some 'merry Man Andrew', both with fairground associations (I. 2, pp. 20–21). A 'merry andrew' is surely one of the Punch figures inhabiting fairground booths, which at times turn the 'plebeians' ultimate comic

²⁰ Ronald Paulson, *Popular and Polite Art in the Age of Hogarth and Fielding* (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), p. 26. Paulson expounds the Wilkite street rituals in the 1760s in Ch. 3. For an account of Jacobite rural symbolism, see Murray G. H. Pittock, 'Rights of Nature: The Ideal Images of Jacobite Ruralism', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 13 (1990), 223–37.

effigies of themselves in relation to the “other” (Paulson, p. 184).²¹ As for Joseph’s cudgel-playing, of which we shall observe several examples as the story goes on (I. 12, III. 6, and IV. 11), Brooks-Davies suggests that Joseph’s cudgel, along with Adams’s crabstick, is related to Hercules’ club, with an account of classical and contemporary views of the mythic Hercules as the ‘traditional exemplar of heroic virtue’.²² In my judgement, though, the Hercules motif in *Joseph Andrews* or indeed any of Fielding’s writings is hardly, if ever, so purely classical as Brooks-Davies suggests. To say nothing of the anti-Walpole prints ironically depicting Walpole as a modern Hercules, Fielding modelled the ‘Champion’, namely, ‘Captain Hercules Vinegar’, on a real-life prize-fighter from Hockley in the Hole, a fact of which Brooks-Davies does not seem aware, even though he does refer to the Champion (p. xiin). Implicit and explicit allusions to the mythic Hercules notwithstanding, the more immediate inspiration for either Hercules Vinegar or Joseph Andrews, the great grandson of a legendary ‘Cudgel-player’, is rather the popular Hercules with Hockelyan or rural fairground associations. From the outset, Joseph Andrews cuts a strikingly potent figure as popular foil to the great, of which a provoking suggestion is imbedded in the following:

But suppose for Argument’s sake we should admit that he had no Ancestors at all, but had sprung up, according to the modern Phrase, out of a Dunghill, [...] would not this **Autokopros* [‘In English, sprung from a Dunghil.’—Fielding’s note] have been justly entitled to all the Praise arising from his own Virtues? Would it not be hard that a Man who hath no Ancestors should therefore be render’d incapable of acquiring Honour, when we see so many who have no Virtues, enjoying the Honour of their Forefathers? (p. 21)

A strong intimation of by far the most remarkable of Joseph’s natural endowments is comprehended in the very first duty assigned to ‘Little Joey’ at ten.

²¹ Paulson particularly refers to the resemblance of Hogarth’s caricature of Wilkes in 1763 to a Punch figure with ‘his physical deformity (his ugly, cockeyed face—the contrary of the ideal quality associated with aristocratic icons), his sexual potency, and his persistent violation through destruction, not appropriation, of property’ (p. 26).

²² Douglas Brooks-Davies, Introduction, *Joseph Andrews and Shamela*, ed. by Douglas Brooks-Davies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. xii–xiii.

Bound an apprentice to Sir Thomas 'according to the Statute',²³ Little Joey is at first employed in 'keeping Birds': 'His Office was to perform the Part the Antients assigned to the God *Priapus*, which Deity the Moderns call the Name of *Jack-o'-Lent*' (I. 2, p. 21). As noted earlier, the same deity is associated with the nativity of the thief-taker-to-be in *Jonathan Wild*, too, being the 'Terror' of anybody practising 'Ingenuity' (I. 3, p. 16). In *Joseph Andrews*, though, the primary allusion is not so much to Priapus' role as guardian of gardens as to the threatening sexuality he traditionally symbolises. The statue of Priapus usually represented 'a grotesque little figure with an enormous phallus' (p. 21n), 'naked and obscene, with a stern countenance, matted hair, crowned with garden herbs, and holding a wooden sword, or scythe' (Brooks-Davies, p. 367n), to be placed in gardens or orchards 'as a kind of scarecrow'. Little Joey's association with this god of terrifying virility strongly promises the same quality in young Joseph as 'sexually potent male youth'. General signs aside, the Priapus association is evident, for example, in Slipslop's description of Joseph to Lady Booby: 'in my Eyes he is as ugly as a Scarecrow as I ever Upheld' (I. 7, p. 35). Joseph even becomes the living Priapus, when, stripped by highwaymen, he appears 'sitting upright as naked as ever he was born' to a band of travellers (I. 12, p. 52). Their affected reaction notwithstanding, Joseph's stark nakedness is as threatening as Priapus' in implication. Besides, the Priapus in *Joseph Andrews* is subject to the same vulgarisation as Hercules, for the Olympian deity, 'son of Aphrodite and Dionysus' (*Jonathan Wild*, p. 266n), merges with 'Jack-o'-Lent' ('Kack-o'-Lent' or 'Jack-a-Lent'), a scarecrow or a human effigy associated with Ash Wednesday in the popular calendar, in conjunction with the traditional cock-fights on Shrove Tuesday (Brooks-Davies, p. 367n).²⁴ It is essentially the subversive potential of the 'low and popular' that is embodied in the naked Joseph as vulgarised Priapus.

²³ Joseph's early apprenticeship in fact violates the Elizabethan Statute of Apprentices, which required a minimum age of twelve for anybody to be bound an apprentice (p. 21n).

²⁴ It is probable that Fielding had the latter tradition in mind in describing the battle between Adams and Fanny's attempted rapist in Book II, Chapter 9, as if it were a cock-fight. I will return to this scene later on.

Another gift of Joseph's is his 'extremely musical' voice, which turns out to fit ill with his first office of keeping birds: 'his Voice being so extremely musical, that it rather allured the Birds than terrified them' (I. 2, p. 21). He is removed from the fields to Sir Thomas's dog-kennel, where the dogs, like the birds, turn out to prefer 'the Melody of his chiding to all the alluring Notes of the Huntsman' (I. 2, p. 22). From these instances from Joseph's childhood it appears that his enchanting voice is a significant indication of his harmony with animal life. Later, Joseph's musical talent earns him an 'Opportunity of distinguishing himself by singing Psalms' at church, attracting not only the 'Notice of Mr. Abraham Adams' but perhaps that of not a few parish girls as well. If his taste in music seems briefly affected by the nicety of an operatic 'Connoisseur' in the London scene (I. 4, p. 27), Joseph's voice recovers its rural colour on his way back home. Thus, when his singing of 'a very, very naughty little piece' about the typically pastoral lovers 'Strephon and Chloe' is about to occasion his reunion with Fanny (II. 12),²⁵ the as yet unidentified songster is called 'Nightingale', like Jonson's ballad singer in *Bartholomew Fair*, recalling little Joey's natural harmony with birds and animals.

Joseph's animal spirit begins to come out soon after his removal to the stable, where he shows 'Proofs of Strength and Agility, beyond his Years', riding 'the most spirited and vicious Horses to water with an Intrepidity which surprized every one' (I. 2, p. 22). The portraits of young Joseph and Fanny, too, depict the shapes and colours of their features and the curves and movements of their limbs in luscious detail, almost as if they were a couple of animals in their prime.

Mr. *Joseph Andrews* was now in the one and twentieth Year of his Age. He was of the highest Degree of middle Stature. His Limbs were put together with great Elegance and no less Strength. His Legs and Thighs were formed in the exactest Proportion. His Shoulders were broad and brawny, but yet his Arms hung so easily, that he had all the Symptoms of Strength without the least clumsiness. His Hair was of a nut-brown Colour, and was displayed in wanton Ringlets down his Back. His Forehead was high, his Eyes dark, and as

²⁵ See Dick Taylor, Jr., 'Joseph as Hero in *Joseph Andrews*', *Tulane Studies*, 7 (1957), 91–109 (p.93), and Treadwell Ruml, II, 'Joseph Andrews as Exemplary Gentleman', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 22 (1992), 195–207 (p. 202).

full of Sweetness as of Fire. His Nose a little inclined to the Roman. His Teeth white and even. His Lips full, red, and soft. His Beard was only rough on his Chin and upper Lip; but his Cheeks, in which his Blood glowed, were overspread with a thick Down. (I. 8, pp. 38–39)

Fanny was now in the nineteenth Year of her Age; she was tall and delicately shaped; but not one of those slender young Women, who seem rather intended to hang up in the Hall of an Anatomist, than for any other Purpose. On the contrary, she was so plump, that she seemed bursting through her tight Stays, especially in the Part which confined her swelling Breasts. Nor did her Hips want the Assistance of a Hoop to extend them. The exact Shape of her arms, denoted the Form of those Limbs which she concealed; and tho' they were a little redden'd by her Labour, yet if her Sleeve slipt above her Elbow, or her Handkerchief discovered any part of her Neck, a Whiteness appeared which the finest *Italian* Paint would be unable to reach. Her Hair was of a Chestnut Brown, and Nature had been extremely lavish to her of it [...]. Her Eyes black and sparkling; her Nose, just inclining to the *Roman*; her Lips red and moist, and her Under-Lip, according to the Opinion of the Ladies, too pouting. Her Teeth were white, but not exactly even. [...] Her Complexion was fair, a little injured by the Sun, but overspread with such a Bloom, that the finest Ladies would have exchanged all their White for it: add to these, a Countenance in which tho' she was extremely bashful, a Sensibility appeared almost incredible; and a Sweetness, whenever she smiled, beyond either Imitation or Description. (II. 12, pp. 152–53)

Joseph and Fanny are 'good-natured', which does not merely means that they are kindly at heart. Their 'good nature' beams through Joseph's 'Lips full, red, and soft', Fanny's 'swelling Breasts', and the like, denoting the 'wanton' and 'lavish' blessings of 'Nature'. Those are the signs of their 'natural Gentility superior to the Acquisition of Art' (p. 153), beyond the imitation of 'finest Ladies' or 'spindle-shanked Beaus' (p. 194).

In view of the positive meaning of natural animality in *Joseph Andrews*, it is significant that most characters, including negative ones, are compared to some kinds of animals in one context or another. Adams is 'as brisk as a Bee' (III. 2, p. 192), snores 'louder than the usual braying of the Animal with long Ears' (III. 6, p. 236), and fights, when necessary, as fiercely as any 'Game-Cock' (II. 9, p. 138). Slipslop looks like 'a Cow', particularly in the 'two brown Globes which she carried before her' (I. 6, p. 32). The amorous Slipslop is prepared to leap on her prey Joseph, 'as when a hungry Tygress, who long had traversed the Woods in fruitless search, sees within the Reach of her Claws a Lamb, [...] or as a voracious Pike, of immense Size, surveys through the liquid Element a Roach or Gudgeon which cannot escape her

Jaws, opens them wide to swallow the little Fish' (I. 6, p. 33). A 'Dragon' appears in the portrait of Mrs. Tow-wouse as well as on the 'Sign of the Inn' (I. 14, p. 61), and Parson Trulliber resembles the 'Hogs' he deals in and has the gait of a 'Goose' (II. 14, p. 162). It is true that animal allusions concerning negative characters suggest their simple bestiality rather than the same good nature as appears in Joseph, Fanny, and Adams, although they are all 'Brutes' in the eyes of the great. As for their implied brutality, though, they are not more brutal than the roasting squire, the 'great Hunter of Men', who chases Adams as if he were a 'Hare', for which the parson is indeed mistaken by the hounds of the squire. Who are more truly brutal, then, the 'two-leg'd Curs on horseback' or 'their four-footed Allies' (III. 6, pp. 238, 243)? On the other hand, the lower orders or 'Brutes' are at least brisk and lively, thus distinguished from the great living a life 'below the Life of an Animal, hardly above Vegetation' (III. 3, pp. 204–05). Hence Beau Didapper, 'the little Person or rather Thing' (IV. 9, p. 313).

The role of Beau Didapper, modelled, like his precursor Lord Dapper in *The Historical Register* and *Eurydice Hissed*, upon John, Lord Hervey, deserves much more emphasis than is usually put on it, although he is only briefly present from Book IV, Chapter 7 onwards.²⁶ Didapper's introduction is preceded by frequent contrasts between beaus of genteel impotence and Joseph as emblem of sexual virility from the lower orders.

Learn hence, my fair Countrywomen, to consider your own Weakness, and the many Occasions on which the Strength of a Man may be useful to you; and duly weighing this, take care, that you match not yourselves with the spindle-shanked Beaus and Petit Maîtres of the Age, who instead of being able like

²⁶ The name 'Dapper' had been associated with any foppish character from before Hervey's times. For example, see 'Tim Dapper' in the *Tatler*, Nos. 85 and 92, or the clerk ('a fine young quodling') simply named 'Dapper' in Jonson's *Alchemist* (I. 1. 189), in *The Complete Plays of Ben Jonson*, ed. by G. A. Wilkes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982) III, 239. The most direct source for Fielding's 'Dapper' or 'Didapper' is an opposition pamphlet, *The State Weathercocks* (March 1734), in which Hervey was described as 'Dapper, a Youth smooth chin'd, and baby fac'd'. This description seems to have gained some currency in the opposition press, for at least another pamphlet, *Tell-tele Cupids* (1735), mimicked it in portraying the 'pretty baby fac'd Lord Dapper' whose 'Talent lies in Writing and who has fought one cowardly duel': see Robert Halsband, *Lord Hervey: Eighteenth-Century Courtier* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), pp. 166 and 176n. For an account of more specific contexts to Fielding's satire at Hervey in *Shamela* and *Joseph Andrews*, see Battestin, 'Lord Hervey's Role in *Joseph Andrews*', *PQ*, 42 (1963), 226–41. Battestin's essay, though, does not offer a full discussion of the contrast between Joseph and Didapper/Hervey.

Joseph Andrews, to carry you in lusty Arms through the rugged ways and downhill Steeps of Life, will rather want to support their feeble Limbs with your Strength and Assistance. (III. 2, p. 194)

No sooner did *Joseph Andrews* perceive the Distress of his Friend [Adams], when first the quick-scenting Dogs attacked him, than he grasped his Cudgel in his right Hand, a Cudgel which his Father had of his Grandfather, to whom a mighty strong Man of *Kent* had given it for a Present in that Day, when he broke three Heads on the Stage. It was a Cudgel of mighty Strength and wonderful Art, made by one of Mr. *Deard's* best Workmen, whom no other Artificer can equal; and who hath made all those Sticks which the Beaus have lately walked with about the Park in a Morning: But this was far his Master-piece. (III. 6, pp. 239–40)²⁷

The Captain [...] drew forth his Hanger, as *Adams* approached him, and was levelling a Blow at his Head, which would probably have silenced the Preacher for ever, had not *Joseph* in that Instant lifted up a certain huge Stone Pot of the Chamber with one Hand, which six Beaus could not have lifted with both, and discharged it, together with the Contents, full in the Captain's Face. (III. 9, pp. 257–58)

On every occasion, Joseph displays his strength and agility to rescue Fanny or Adams from a plight, in a manner the 'spindle-shanked Beaus' are incapable of. It is particularly interesting to recall that *Shamela* used the same attribute, 'spindle-shanked', with reference to Squire Booby, which indicates a significant affinity between Joseph and Parson Williams as foils to the 'spindle-shanked'. Joseph surpasses beaus not merely in strength but, it is implied, in sexual potency too, like Williams in *Shamela*. Hence the following *tête-à-tête* between Lady Booby and Slipslop:

'Is he not more worthy Affection than a dirty Country Clown, tho' born of a Family as old as the Flood, or an idle worthless Rake, or little puisny Beau of Quality? [...] What dost thou think of Mr. *Andrews*?' 'Why I think', says *Slipslop*, 'he is the handsomest most properest Man I ever saw; [...] I am *confidous* there is no more Comparison between young Mr. *Andrews*, and most of the young Gentlemen who come to your Ladyship's House in London; a Parcel of *Whipper-snapper* Sparks: I would sooner marry our old Parson *Adams*. Never tell me what People say, whilst I am happy in the Arms of him I love.' (IV. 6, pp. 296–97)

²⁷ The 'strong Man of Kent' refers to William Joy (d. 1734), celebrated for various feats of strength he operated under the pseudonym of 'Samson, the strong man of Kent' in the early part of the century, and 'Mr. Deard' to William Deard or Deards (d. 17 June 1761), the renowned London jeweller, toymaker, and pawnbroker, prosperous in the 1740s (p. 239n).

Both women agree that Joseph, though a footman, is worthier of 'Affection' than any 'little pusiny Beau of Quality' or the 'Parcel of Whipper-snapper Sparks'. It is now Lady Booby, one of the 'great', who unwittingly catches at the same *double entendre* of the 'littleness' of the great as Shamela regularly used at the expense of Squire Booby.

In relation to the class-based ridicule of 'Sparks' of quality, yet another significant contrast appears between Fanny's two attempted ravishers, one presumably from the lower orders (Book II, Chapter 9) and the other, Beau Didapper, one of the said 'Parcel of Whipper-snapper Sparks' that frequent Lady Booby's. The following is how the low-born ravisher responds to the unexpected blow from Adams's crabstick, who rushes on to the scene to Fanny's rescue:

As a Game-Cock when engaged in amorous Toying with a Hen, if perchance he espies another Cock at hand, immediately quits his Female, and opposes himself to his Rival; so did the Ravisher, on the Information of the Crabstick, immediately leap from the Woman, and hasten to assail the Man. He had no Weapons but what Nature had furnished him with. However, he clenched his Fist, and presently darted it at that Part of *Adams's* Breast where the Heart is lodged. *Adams* staggered at the Violence of the Blow, when throwing away his Staff, he likewise clenched that Fist which we have before commemorated, and would have discharged it full in the Breast of his Antagonist, had he not dexterously caught it with his left Hand, at the same time darting his Head, (which some modern Heroes, of the lower Class, use like the Battering-Ram of the Ancients, for a Weapon of Offence; another Reason to admire the Cunningness of Nature, in composing it of those impenetrable Materials) dashing his Head, I say, into the Stomach of *Adams*, he tumbled him on his Back, and not having any regard to the Laws of Heroism, which would have restrained him from any farther Attack on his Enemy, 'till he was again on his Legs, he threw himself upon him, and laying hold on the Ground with his left Hand, he with his right belaboured the Body of *Adams* 'till he was weary, and indeed, 'till he concluded (to use the Language of fighting) *that he had done his Business*; or, in the Language of Poetry, *that he had sent him to the Shades below*; in plain *English*, *that he was dead*. (II. 9, p. 138)

Coming from the 'lower Class', the 'Game-Cock' ravisher immediately falls to battle, truly in the manner of a cock-fight, against the 'no Chicken' Parson Adams. Compare with this the following illustration of Beau Didapper's typical manner of dealing with the consequence of his dalliance with Fanny in front of her champion.

The said Beau watching an Opportunity whilst the Ladies Eyes were disposed another way, offered a Rudeness to her with his Hands; which *Joseph* no sooner perceived than he presented him with so sound a Box on the Ear, that it conveyed him several Paces from where he stood. The Ladies immediately screamed out, rose from their Chairs, and the Beau, as soon as he recovered himself, drew his Hanger, which *Adams* observing, snatched up the Lid of a Pot in his left Hand, and covering himself with it as with a Shield, without any Weapon of Offence in his other Hand, stept in before *Joseph*, and exposed himself to the enraged Beau, who threatened such Perdition and Destruction, that it frightened the Women, who were all got in a huddle together, out of their Wits; even to hear his Denunciations of Vengeance. *Joseph* was of a different Complexion, and begged *Adams* to let his Rival come on; for he had a good Cudgel in his Hand, and did not fear him. *Fanny* now fainted into Mrs. *Adams*'s Arms, and the whole Room was in Confusion, when Mr. *Booby* passing by *Adams*, who lay snug under the Pot-Lid, came up to *Didapper*, and insisted on his sheathing the Hanger, promising he should have Satisfaction; which *Joseph* declared he would give him, and fight him at any Weapon whatever. The Beau now sheathed his Hanger, and taking out a Pocket-Glass, and vowing Vengeance all the Time, re-adjusted his Hair.

(IV. 11, pp. 320–21)

Didapper's 'Hanger', representing his genteel privilege to carry weaponry, contrasts well with the first ravisher's having 'no Weapons but what Nature had furnished with him' on one hand, and with Adams's make-shift shield, the 'Lid of a Pot', and Joseph's 'Cudgel', a distinctively plebeian weapon, on the other. However, the comic contrast and mocking apprehensions about the imminent 'Vengeance' of the 'enraged Beau' only underline his genteel incapacity to make a spontaneous and potent reaction to such an express provocation as Joseph's. Compared with this, both Joseph's intrepidity in Fanny's behalf and Adams's comic spontaneity in intervening to protect Joseph from the 'enraged Beau' appear almost dignified as well as simply engaging. Of the low-born counterpart to Didapper, too, we can, with hindsight, at least say that he is not among the sorry 'spindle-shanked'. After all, 'a Pocket-Glass' becomes Didapper better than the 'Hanger', as established by his precursor Lord Dapper in the plays.

Didapper's drawing of his hanger also points to the characteristically genteel habit of duelling, in contrast to such vulgar forms of contest as boxing, cudgel-playing, and so forth. In this regard, it is no coincidence that Didapper's original, Lord Hervey, was known to his contemporaries for, among other things, 'one cowardly duel' he

fought against Pulteney on 26 January 1731.²⁸ Didapper fails to fight another against Joseph, as his rival is of no genteel breed, but Leonora's story does present a duel between the heroine's two lovers, Horatio and Bellarmine (II. 4). Bellarmine, the beau of the story, is also vaguely related to Hervey, in that, like Hervey, he converted from Country to Court party: 'before I had a Place, I was in the Country Interest' (p. 112).²⁹ Interestingly, the account of Bellarmine's duel is followed by a 'dreadful Quarrel' involving Parson Adams in the very next chapter (II. 5). What is enacted is a sheer horseplay of 'bloody Consequences' to both parties, with a 'Stream' of human blood gushing out of the nose of Adams's opponent and a panful of 'Hog's-Blood' spattered on Adams. The sequence is hardly incidental, and the low-key and full-blooded horseplay parodies the preceding duel between Horatio and Bellarmine, which is quite bloodless and leaning towards a 'high-life "tragedy"'.³⁰

To return to Didapper, his final fiasco awaits him in Book IV, Chapter 14, in which Didapper intrudes by mistake upon Slipslop's bed instead of Fanny's and finds a rescuer in Adams, who rushes on to the scene in the following manner:

He made directly to the Bed in the dark, where laying hold of the Beau's Skin (for *Slipslop* had torn his Shirt almost off) and finding his Skin extremely soft, and hearing him in a low Voice begging *Slipslop* to let him go, he no longer doubted but this was the young Woman in danger of ravishing, and immediately falling on the Bed, and laying hold on *Slipslop*'s Chin, where he found a rough Beard, his Belief was confirmed; he therefore rescued the Beau, who presently made his Escape. (pp. 331–32)

Adams is not completely mistaken, for Slipslop is indeed more capable of 'ravishing' than the soft-skinned beau, who, without Adams's help, must have had a harder time in Slipslop's hand. In this episode, the effeminate and impotent Beau Didapper is not

²⁸ See Halsband, pp. 113–18 for a detailed account of the duel. The duel became the *cause célèbre* of several ballads and cartoons (e.g. Percival, Ballad No. XVIII, and Langford, Plate 17), and the opposition 'used the duel as a weapon against Walpole' (Halsband, p. 118).

²⁹ Of this passage, Battestin remarks that it is a dig at Pulteney and Carteret (p. 112n). This reading need not exclude others, though, especially considering that Hervey had joined Pulteney in his earlier opposition to Walpole, before turning Walpole's henchman in the House of Lords at the accession of George II.

³⁰ Douglas Brooks, 'The Interpolated Tales in *Joseph Andrews* Again', *MP*, 65 (1968), 208–13 (p. 209).

only harassed by a rough-bearded woman but mistaken for the ravished, not the ravisher. In explaining 'his Mistakes' to Lady Booby, Adams makes explicit Didapper's anti-Herculean association: 'I mistook [Didapper] for a Woman on coming into the Room, whence proceeded all the subsequent Mistakes; for if I had suspected him for a Man, I would have seized him had he been another *Hercules*, tho' indeed he seems rather to resemble *Hylas*' (p. 333). This episode, corroborating the contrast between the high-life beau and the Herculean footman, the champion of Fanny and 'Low People', aptly sums up the novel's ingenious satire on the impotence of the *beau monde* or 'High People'.³¹

The 'great Folks' in *Joseph Andrews*, as represented by the impotent Didapper and the mock-'Patroness' Lady Booby, have deserted their patrician responsibilities to look after the lower orders, looking down upon them simply as 'The Brutes'. In retaliation, *Joseph Andrews* depicts them as utterly inanimate and impotent, 'below the Life of an Animal, hardly above Vegetation', while lavishly bestowing all the symptoms of 'natural' goodness, animal vigour and fertility on the 'Reptile of a lower Order'. In the following section, we shall examine a particular species of these 'Brutes', that is, authors, in antagonistic relations to the 'great Folks'.

4. Authors, Men of Quality, and the Trade of Authoring

In accordance with the novel's sustained criticism of 'High People' from the perspective of 'Low People', descriptions of authorship in *Joseph Andrews* are based on a persistent identification of authors with 'Low People'. The identification is explicit, for example, in the chapter titled 'Of Divisions in Authors' (II. 1), where the Author reveals one of the 'Secrets' of 'Authoring', namely, the 'Art of dividing', with the initial postulate that 'there are certain Mysteries or Secrets in all Trades from the

³¹ Lord Hervey is also remembered by the name 'Fanny' (Pope's sobriquet), to whom Fielding ironically dedicates *Shamela*. In *Joseph Andrews*, Fielding not only literalises the joke by having Didapper taken for a woman but curiously gives the same name to the heroine and makes Hervey/Didapper an impotent ravisher of his namesake.

highest to the lowest, from that of *Prime Ministering* to this of *Authoring*' (p. 89). Aspects of this 'lowest' trade of all, especially its attendance upon 'High People', are fully dramatised in the careers of the two internal authors in *Joseph Andrews*, namely, Mr. Wilson and Parson Adams.

The autobiographical history of Wilson in *Joseph Andrews* (III. 3), commonly accepted as based on Fielding's own experiences through the first decade of his career, delivers a thoroughly despairing review of an author's life, unmitigated by any degree of irony or humour, which is rare in Fielding and the more important for that reason, too. For a telling example of Fielding's self-identification with Wilson, his recent incarceration at the bailiff's for the sum of '£35.9.8' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 296) is dramatised into Wilson's same mishap for the same amount of 'thirty-five Pounds' (p. 219). Though not all details are strictly self-referential, some turn out to be as faithful as this to the minutiae of Fielding's life. Like Fielding, Wilson enters into his authorial career via the theatre as follows:

Poverty and Distress with their horrid Train of Duns, Attorneys, Bailiffs, haunted me Day and Night. My Clothes grew shabby, my Credit bad, my Friends and Acquaintance of all kinds cold. In this Situation the strangest Thought imaginable came into my Head; and what was this, but to write a Play? for I had sufficient Leisure; Fear of Bailiffs confined me every Day to my Room; and having always had a little Inclination and something of a Genius that way, I set myself to work, and within few Months produced a Piece of five Acts, which was accepted of at the Theatre. (p. 215)

As he recalls, Wilson just hit upon the 'strangest Thought' of turning a playwright, having 'sufficient Leisure', 'a little Inclination and something of a Genius', and indeed some qualifications that way: 'My Education was liberal, and at a public School, in which I proceeded so far as to become Master of *Latin*, and to be tolerably versed in *Greek Language*' (pp. 201–02). Given his education and needy situation, Wilson's taking up of the pen as livelihood is no unlikely option. In particular, the circumstances of Wilson's setting up as author are particularly relevant to Fielding's ironical recommendation of the 'Trade' as the likeliest 'Maintenance for our Poor' in *The Covent-Garden Journal*, on the ground that 'no Qualification is required [...]

besides that of being able to write, nor any Tools or Stock to set up a Manufacturer, besides a Pen and Ink and a small Quantity of Paper; so that an Author may indeed be equipped at a cheaper Rate than a Blacker of Shoes' (No. 51, 27 June 1752, p. 285). As Fielding's second self, Wilson is presumably distinguished from ordinary hacks. Unlike the unclassical hacks in *The Author's Farce*, for example, he is at least 'Master of Latin' and 'tolerably versed in Greek Language'. In the present context, however, his 'tolerable' accomplishments are less material than the actual exigencies that led to his setting up the cheapest as well as lowest trade of all. Like Fielding, Wilson had 'no choice [...] but to be a Hackney Writer or a Hackney Coachman'.

Though authorship is the cheapest business to set up, it is certainly no way out of 'Poverty'. Wilson goes on to recall how he struggled in vain to get his 'Papers' to 'pass current':

I remembred to have formerly taken Tickets of other Poets for their Benefits long before the Appearance of their Performances, and resolving to follow a Precedent, which was so well suited to my present Circumstances; I immediately provided myself with a large Number of little Papers. Happy indeed would be the State of Poetry, would these Tickets pass current at the Bakehouse, the Ale-House, and the Chandler's-Shop: But alas! far otherwise; no Taylor will take them in Payment for Buckram, Stays, Stay-tape; nor no Bailiff for Civility-Money. (p. 215)

The same 'Precedent', we remember, was followed by Trapwit and Fustian to no better effect in *Pasquin*. In *Joseph Andrews*, this particular grievance faced by authors is eloquently dramatised in an episode involving Parson Adams (I. 16), where we are first acquainted with the existence of 'no less than nine Volumes of Manuscript Sermons' in Adams's hand. Out of money to clear the account at Tow-ouse's, this very proud author, 'with a Face and Voice full of Solemnity', calls on the landlord to lend him three guineas on the 'ample Security' of one volume of his sermons, which he is sure will 'at least bring him ten Pounds'. The reaction of Tow-ouse, 'a little surprized at the Pawn', having expected 'a Watch, or Ring, or something of double the Value', speaks for itself:

The Landlord replied, 'he did not believe he had so much Money in the House, and besides he was to make up a Sum. He was very confident the Books were of much higher Value, and heartily sorry it did not suit him.' He then cry'd out, *Coming Sir!* though no body called, and ran down Stairs without any Fear of breaking his Neck. (p. 73)

Likewise, the departed Author of the manuscript of the *Journey from This World to the Next* would have seen better days, if only his 'Papers' had passed 'current'. As it was, the manuscript, it is explained in the introduction, was found in his 'Garret' by his landlord, 'hawked about [...] among all the Booksellers' but to be rejected, and finally used as 'waste Paper', until it happened to reach another author (the 'I' in the introduction) in that form.³²

Yet 'Poverty' is hardly the worst part of an author's life, for on approaching the great with his play tickets, just like Fustian, Wilson undergoes 'what is worse than Poverty', that is, 'Attendance and Dependence on the Great'. He is exposed to mortifications 'in the cold Parlours of Men of Quality', where 'many a Morning' he is told after hours' waiting that 'my Lord could not possibly see me this morning: A sufficient Assurance that I should never more get entrance into that house' (p. 215). On rare occasions of admission into the levy of the 'great Man', the author goes through potentially even more mortifying ordeals in asking for some sort of encouragement in person and more often than not getting plain enough rejections. As witnessed by Wilson, certain cant terms and codified conducts are understood by both author and patron as 'sufficient Assurance' of the unsaid. 'Tied up' is a typical term used by the great to rebuff requests for subscription, the meaning of which is totally unknown to Adams. Though he is an author himself, Adams is happily unacquainted with the sordid realities of authorship, so that Wilson relates to him a short history of publishing by subscription as follows:

³² *A Journey from This World to the Next*, in *Miscellanies by Henry Fielding, Esq: Volume Two*, ed. by Hugh Amory, with introduction and commentary by Bertrand A. Goldgar (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 3–4. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

The Profit which Booksellers allowed Authors for the best Works, was so very small, that certain Men of Birth and Fortune some Years ago, who were the Patrons of Wit and Learning, thought fit to encourage them farther, by entring into voluntary Subscriptions for their Encouragement. Thus *Prior*, *Rowe*, *Pope*, and some other Men of Genius, received large Sums for their Labours from the Public. This seemed so easy a Method of getting Money, that many of the lowest Scriblers of the Times ventured to publish their Works in the same Way; and many had the Assurance to take in Subscriptions for what was not writ, nor ever intended. Subscriptions in this manner growing infinite, and a kind of Tax on the Public; some Persons finding it not so easy a Task to discern good from bad Authors, or to know what Genius was worthy Encouragement, and what was not, to prevent the Expence of Subscribing to so many, invented a Method to excuse themselves from all Subscriptions whatever; and this was to receive a small Sum of Money in consideration of giving a large one if ever they subscribed; which many have done, and many more have pretended to have done, in order to silence all Sollicitation. The same Method was likewise taken with Playhouse Tickets, which were no less a public Grievance; and this is what they call being *tied up* from subscribing.
(pp. 215–16)

An extended version of Bookweight's remark that 'people begin to be afraid of authors since they have writ and acted like stock-jobbers' (II. 6), Wilson's account is in itself an indispensable contemporary document of the history and inside details of publishing by subscription.³³ Taken as a straightforward rendering of Fielding's own sentiments, it apparently exhibits a two-fold criticism of 'bad Authors' and undiscerning patrons, to the effect that owing to their joint misuse of the custom, 'good' authors are nowadays deprived of the benefits that used to be conferred on 'Prior, Rowe, Pope, and some other Men of Genius'. Yet, in so far as distinguishing 'good from bad Authors' is at the heart of the liability of the great, their failure or indeed inability to do so is more at issue here than the presumption and imposition of the 'lowest Scriblers'. This is confirmed by Adams's comment: 'I can't say but the Term is apt enough, and somewhat typical [...] for a Man of large Fortune, who ties himself up, as you call it, from the Encouragement of Men of Merit, ought to be tied up in reality' (p. 216).

³³ Speck refers to this part of Wilson's history in length (p. 49), in outlining the implications of publication by subscription, especially in terms of the aristocracy's dominance in subscription lists.

On the other hand, Wilson's 'utmost Mortification' is still to be recalled, as the worst moment in the life of an author as a dependent on the great comes when the grudging encouragement is finally thrown on the author in the following manner:

Sometimes I have received a Guinea from a Man of Quality, given with as ill a Grace as Alms are generally to the meanest Beggar, and purchased too with as much Time spent in Attendance, as, if it had been spent in honest Industry, might have brought me more Profit with infinitely more Satisfaction. (p. 216)

It is no coincidence that we are reminded by this of Fielding's own recollection in *The Champion* (4 October 1740), quoted in the preceding chapter, of the similar moment in relation to the suppression of *Jonathan Wild*. As we have remarked, the demeanour of the Great Man on this occasion is recalled with particular chagrin by the self-conscious author, to whom the incident, supposing it did take place, may well have typified the worst mortification encountered by authors in their dependent relations upon the great. The 'Man of Quality' in Wilson's story seems less likely to represent Walpole as individual than a more generalised great man as patron of authors. Accordingly, the relationship between Fielding and his patrons or the great in general is not less relevant to Wilson's recollection than his receipt of Walpole's money. Though this is not the first occasion that he resents his attendance on the great, Fielding was formerly precluded from openly dwelling upon his complex feelings towards his patrons, first because of the nature of his relationship with them, and secondly because of the peculiar rationale of the opposition to Walpole. Opposition writers were not expected to remark directly upon their relations to their patrons, still less the want of material encouragement from them, which would have been equal to contradicting their claim of disinterested opposition and eventually their main accusation against Walpole and his writers of mercenariness. In Wilson's story, however, the Great Man is replaced by 'a Man of Quality', less an individual than a type representing the class with whom Fielding as author had always been in highly tensioned relationship. Thus Wilson's recollection of 'Attendance and Dependence on the Great' as the worst aspect of an author's life, which reduces the author to feeling

little better than 'the meanest Beggar', can be understood as a most despondent rendering of Fielding's own concern and resentment against that 'Attendance'.

Fielding's relationships with his individual patrons are referred to in *Joseph Andrews* in highly ambivalent, if not openly despairing, terms. We find the digression on 'high People' in Book III, Chapter 1 directly relevant to this issue. Titled 'Matter prefatory in Praise of Biography', the chapter in question is concerned with defending the new kind of biography, which is different from the 'Lives of Great Men', in that it deals with the possible, not the historically factual, and a 'Species', not an 'Individual' (p. 189). This apologia is followed by a specific provision as to 'our Descriptions of high People', in which

we cannot be intended to include such, as whilst they are an Honour to their high Rank, by a well-guided Condensation, make their Superiority as easy as possible, to those whom Fortune chiefly hath placed below them. Of this number I could name a Peer no less elevated by Nature than by Fortune, who whilst he wears the noblest Ensigns of Honour on his Person, bears the truest Stamp of Dignity on his Mind, adorned with Greatness, enriched with Knowledge, and embellished with Genius. I have seen this Man relieve with Generosity, while he hath conversed with Freedom, and be to the same Person a Patron and a Companion. I could name a Commoner raised higher above the Multitude by superior Talents, than is in the Power of his Prince to exalt him; whose Behaviour to those he hath obliged is more amiable than the Obligation itself, and who is so great a Master of Affability, that if he could divest himself of an inherent Greatness in his Manner, would often make the lowest of his Acquaintance forget who was the Master of that Palace, in which they are so courteously entertained. (pp. 190–91)

The 'Peer' and the 'Commoner' particularly eulogised here are identified as the Earl of Chesterfield and Ralph Allen respectively, the former one of Fielding's opposition patrons and the latter his most recent benefactor (p. 190n). A couple of points should be made, before we can rightly analyse these panegyrics. First of all, it is not impossible that Fielding retained relationship with some of his opposition patrons even during this period of serious disillusion, although he was estranged once and for all from others like Pulteney and Carteret. Fielding would no longer owe them any compliment like that he paid them in 'Of True Greatness', for example. Secondly, to pay homage to named or nameable benefactors is one thing, and to complain in

general terms about the disregard for authors by unspecified great men is quite another, so that the former is not in itself incompatible with the latter. What is most remarkable in Fielding's specific praise of his patrons is the way he stresses their 'well-guided Condescension [...] to those whom Fortune chiefly hath placed below them', in sharp contrast to the hateful manner of the 'Man of Quality' recollected by Wilson. Thus the 'Peer' becomes 'to the same Person a Patron and a Companion', and the 'Commoner' allows the 'lowest of his Acquaintance' to forget the distinction between 'Master' and attendant. To me it seems that such emphasis ironically reveals Fielding's troubled consciousness of the social distance between him and his patrons, although only 'Fortune chiefly hath placed [him] below them'. Hence his subtle but persistent enough effort to level himself 'up' as 'Companion' to the patrons. Likewise, it is implied that their true 'Greatness' lies in rewarding merit with right discernment and 'Freedom', so that the obligation may fall 'as easy as possible' on the obliged. With such ideal patrons, authors should not feel indebted, for their recognised merit is in itself a justification of encouragement, making unnecessary repayment in the form of interest-directed service to their paymasters. Yet such disinterested relationship is not feasible in reality, and the anxiety about the constraints imposed on an author by even the most dignified relation with a patron is due to become more crucial in Fielding's ministerial writings and *Tom Jones*, as will be seen in the following chapter.

For Fielding, it is essential to be able to detach his work from the interest nexus inherent in the patron-author relationship, in order to claim his authorial right against his obligations to the patrons. Patronage, it is implied, should not divest authors of their right. In various contexts, Fielding inserts disguised refusals to yield his authorial right to whomever he owes material compensation, whether it is a patron or a suppresser like Walpole. In *Joseph Andrews*, the question of authorial right is incorporated, significantly enough, into the 'Moral Reflections' of the footman hero. With reference to 'the finest House, Furniture, Pictures or Clothes that were ever beheld', Joseph remarks that

when we so admire [them], we rather praise the Builder, the Workman, the Painter, the Laceman, the Taylor, and the rest, by whose Ingenuity they are produced, than the Person who by his Money makes them his own. For my own part, when I have waited behind my Lady in a Room hung with fine Pictures, while I have been looking at them I have never once thought of their Owner, nor hath any one else, as I ever observed; for when it hath been asked whose Picture that was, it was never once answered, the Master's of the House, but *Ammyconni*, *Paul Varnish*, *Hannibal Scratchi*, or *Hogarthi*, which I suppose were the Names of the Painters. (III. 6, p. 234)

As noted in an earlier section, the primary concern of Joseph's 'Moral Reflections' is with the want of 'Charity' in the 'great Folks', but no less crucial is this implicit argument that on the rare occasions when material encouragement is conferred, 'Money' cannot shift author-ity from 'the Builder, the Workman, the Painter, the Laceman, the Taylor', or the author. Author-ity is essentially created by the 'Ingenuity' of each author, so that it is the author, not the material 'Owner' or patron, that should possess the primal ownership.

It is particularly interesting to note that this primal and unalienable author-ity is associated with the proper 'Names' of individual authors, considering Fielding's abiding concern with 'Names'. Fielding's earlier career, as we have remarked, involved a complicated process of borrowing names from others on one hand and creating many Authors named anything but 'Henry Fielding' on the other. First of all, Fielding as novice writer borrowed names from the Scriblerians with a view to borrowing their established literary authority. Likewise, Fielding rightly perceived that in a book 'Dedicated to his Grace the Duke of—or the Right Honourable the Earl of—', the patron 'may properly be said *to give a name* to the book', or more properly, the author seeks the cultural exaltation associated with the 'name' of the patron (*The Historical Register*, Preface to the Dedication). As revealed in the same preface, he was highly conscious of the material service of such dedication as 'advertisement', and it was not without this in mind that Fielding, in his later career, too, would name the 'names' of his patrons, for example, in the inaugurating leader of *The True Patriot* and the dedications of *Tom Jones* and *Amelia*. In particular, the name of George

Lyttelton, by far the most important of Fielding's patrons, was crucially associated with all these publications: Lyttelton's name appeared alongside Fielding's own and several others, all in the so-called 'disemvowelled' form, in the *True Patriot* essay (p. 110); he was, most notably, the dedicatee of *Tom Jones*; and his pre-publication puffs of *Amelia*, though the novel was dedicated to Ralph Allen, played some considerable part in heightening public interest in the novel, for the copy of which Fielding is believed to have received the record sum of £800 (Battestin, *Amelia*, General Introduction, pp. xlv). On the other hand, it was not until his preface to *Miscellanies* in 1743 that Fielding declared that 'I will never hereafter publish any Book or Pamphlet whatever, to which I will not put my Name' (p. 15). The timing is significant, in that it is only after the unexpected success of the first edition of *Joseph Andrews* in February 1742 that Fielding began to regularly publish his writings with his name appearing on title-pages. As we remember, the success of *Pasquin* had similarly occasioned Fielding to sign and refer to himself as 'Pasquin' or 'the author of Pasquin' at least until the end of his theatrical career. Nevertheless, it was not quite identical with signing 'Henry Fielding' and fully acknowledging his authorship in public. Thus only the dedicated plays and poems appeared with the name 'Henry Fielding' as dedicator before 1742, and the first edition of *Joseph Andrews* was also published anonymously, with yet another authorising name 'Cervantes', not quite the author's name, on the title-page: 'THE HISTORY OF THE ADVENTURES OF JOSEPH ANDREWS, And of his FRIEND Mr. ABRAHAM ADAMS. Written in Imitation of The Manner of CERVANTES, Author of *Don Quixote*'. The novel proved a great success, and this probably encouraged the author (or his 'sagacious' bookseller) to try publishing *Miscellanies* by subscription, a method Fielding had not seldom criticised with surreptitious envy. The first advertisement for subscribers appeared on 5 June 1742, five days prior to the publication of the second edition of *Joseph Andrews*.³⁴ The third edition, published in March 1743, was the first to carry

34 On 31 May 1742, an Aristophanes translation, *Plautus, the God of Riches: A Comedy*, was published by the collaboration of Fielding and the Reverend William Young (Battestin, *Life*, pp. 348,

the author's name on its title-page, and it was followed about two weeks later by the publication of *Miscellanies*. Years after the triumph of *Pasquin*, the copy of Fielding's first 'comic Romance' paid him the incredible lump sum of about two hundred pounds, which according to an anecdotal report almost dumbfounded the author when it was first suggested by Millar (Battestin, *Life*, pp. 325–26).³⁵ For Fielding, then virtually withdrawn from ill-paid political writing, as he depicted it in *The Opposition*, the commercial success of *Joseph Andrews* was a breakthrough in two ways: first, it redressed his material needs, which he had expected his patrons to provide for but to no avail; secondly, it created a new reputation for him, even though that of a 'Romance Writer' was still highly controversial, as Fielding would insinuate even in the dedication of *Tom Jones*. In owning his authorship of *Joseph Andrews* in public, at least from the third edition onwards, Fielding did what no other author had done before him, for 'neither Defoe nor Swift nor Richardson [...] put their names to mere romances' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 326). Battestin comments: 'that Fielding should even dignify the work by owning it publicly suggests that he understood what he had achieved', and to me it seems relevant to Fielding's concern for authorial ownership, especially against the material ownership which appears to shift to the patron, as expressed in Joseph's 'Moral Reflections'.

The progress of Parson Adams in *Joseph Andrews* is closely analogous to that of an author who, underpaid by the great, sets out for alternative remuneration from published authorship. As mentioned earlier, Adams is in his own right an author of yet unpublished sermons. For his authorial status, Adams's 'low and Scholastic' qualifications, as the Author of *Jonathan Wild* terms them, are requisite.

Mr. Abraham Adams was an excellent Scholar. He was a perfect Master of the Greek and Latin Languages; to which he added a great Share of Knowledge in

and 692). Considering that among the first readers of *Joseph Andrews* Fielding's collaborator was established as model for Parson Adams, it is plausible that the venture was also related to the success of the novel.

³⁵ Fielding had approached another bookseller, to be offered £25 for the copy, which was eventually sold to Andrew Millar for £183. 11s. exactly, a sum 'quite liberal for a first novel' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 325, and *Joseph Andrews*, General Introduction, pp. xxviii–xxx).

the Oriental Tongues, and could read and translate *French, Italian* and *Spanish*. He had applied many Years to the most severe Study, and had treasured up a Fund of Learning rarely to be met with in a University.
(I. 3, pp. 22–23)

In his introduction into the novel, the then curate Adams is most distinguished for such scholastic or literary qualifications, which by hindsight we understand as relevant to his authorial as well as clerical capacity. Adams's literary accomplishments align him not only with Mr. Wilson, the other author in *Joseph Andrews*, though a lesser scholar than this 'perfect Master of the *Greek* and *Latin* Languages', but with the 'Bard' of the 1730 epistle 'To Walpole' as well: '*Tuscan* and *French* are in my Head; | *Latin* I write, and *Greek* I—read' (55). As in the *Champion* essay generally dwelling upon the clergy's clerkship to the great (25 December 1739), emphasis is not so much on Parson Adams's mastery of 'Human Literature' itself but on its variance with his matter-of-fact attendance on the Boobys. Adams's social standing in the hierarchy headed by the Boobys is dramatically located at 'Sir *Thomas*'s Kitchen' (I. 2, p. 22), and the incumbent is 'a kind of Domestic only' in the eyes of the Boobys:

Adams had no nearer Access to Sir *Thomas*, or my Lady, than through the Waiting-Gentlewoman: For Sir *Thomas* was too apt to estimate Men merely by their Dress, or Fortune; and my Lady was a Woman of Gaiety, who had been bless'd with a Town-Education, and never spoke of any of her Country Neighbours, by any other Appellation than that of *The Brutes*. They both regarded the Curate as a kind of Domestic only, belonging to the Parson of the Parish, who was at this time at variance with the Knight. (I. 3, p. 25)

Adams belongs with Slipslop and other servants, in which regard, the way he is looked upon by the Boobys is clearly reminiscent of young Booby's scornful remark in *Shamela* that Parson Williams's 'Family hath been raised from the Dunghill by ours'. By implication, Adams is as much a footman to the great as Joseph is to Lady Booby.

As well as being incapable of discerning merit in any other way than by 'Dress, or Fortune', the Boobys bestow favour, if ever, only according to interest. Under such

patrons, it is predictable that at the onset of the plot proper in *Joseph Andrews*, Parson Adams,

at the Age of Fifty, [...] was provided with a handsome Income of twenty-three Pounds a Year; which however, he could not make any great Figure with: because he lived in a dear Country, and was a little incumbered with a Wife and six Children. (p. 23)

For an incumbent worth the 'handsome' twenty three pounds a year but 'a little incumbered' with a big family, publishing sermons is surely as likely an option as playwriting is for Wilson. Though for his own part, 'having never yet dealt in Printing', he cannot really 'ascertain the exact Value of such things', Adams is informed that no less than a hundred pounds may accrue to him from his sermons when published (I. 16, p. 73). At the age of fifty, presumably after years' attendance upon the great for no greater encouragement than the scanty stipend, Adams sets out on an uncertain journey to the capital of the book trade, in hopes of adding to his income independently of such (mock-)patrons as the Boobys. It can be plausibly argued that Adams's nine volumes of sermons, though they eventually remain unpublished in *Joseph Andrews*, are analogous to Fielding's 'little Volumes' of a new 'comic Romance' (Preface, pp. 3, 4), through which he was likewise seeking to find his way out of what he had recently described as rewardless hack work.

Indeed money is the primary but not the sole attraction for Parson Adams to the idea of publishing his sermons. Unlike Wilson, this country parson remains totally blind to the commerce of authorship, which allows him to be the more charmed with published authorship for its association with cultural distinction, on top of material remuneration. 'The right to publish', as Zionkowski puts it, 'signified the right to cultural authority' ('Territorial Disputes', p. 4). Thus Adams's full 'Solemnity' stands out when he proudly reveals to Tow-ouse that 'no less than nine Volumes of Manuscript Sermons, as well worth a hundred Pound as a Shilling was worth twelve Pence' are in his possession (p. 73). Adams's 'Solemnity' as to the 'worth' of his sermons, shortly checked by Tow-ouse's comic reaction, quoted earlier, meets with

even further correction by a 'Bookseller', to whom he is introduced by Parson Barnabas.

As soon as he had seated himself, the Stranger began in these Words, 'Sir, I do not care absolutely to deny engaging in what my Friend Mr. *Barnabas* recommends: but Sermons are mere Drugs. The Trade is so vastly stocked with them, that really unless they come out with the Name of *Whitfield* or *Westley*, or some other such great Man, as a Bishop, or those sort of People, I don't care to touch, unless now it was a Sermon preached on the *30th of January*, or we could say in the Title Page, published at the *earnest Request* of the Congregation, or the Inhabitants: but truly for a dry Piece of Sermons, I had rather be excused; especially as my Hands are so full at present.

(I. 17, pp. 79–80)

With sermons, as well as with other publications, the 'Name' of the author or 'some other such great Man' counts more than their intrinsic worth, so that Adams's independent attempt is hopelessly impractical. In the shrewd eyes of the bookseller, 'the Copy that sells best, will be always the best Copy', and it is not material whether the commodities he deals in are sermons or farces: 'I am no Enemy to Sermons but because they don't sell: for I would as soon print one of *Whitfield's*, as any Farce whatever' (pp. 80–81). Adams's 'Solemnity' or rather 'Vanity' as author is hardly viable in reality, though it shields him from such total despair as oppressed young Wilson. In this regard, it is interesting to note how Wilson reacts to Adams's 'Vanity', ironically as author of a 'Masterpiece, against Vanity':

Adams now began to fumble in his Pockets, and soon cried out, 'O la! I have it not about me.'—Upon this the Gentleman asking him what he was searching for, he said he searched after a Sermon, which he thought his Master-piece, against Vanity. 'Fie upon it, fie upon it,' cries he, 'why do I ever leave that Sermon out of my Pocket? I wish it was within five Miles, I would willingly fetch it, to read it to you.' The Gentleman answered, that there was no need, for he was cured of that Passion. 'And for that very Reason,' quoth *Adams*, 'I would read it, for I am confident you would admire it: Indeed, I have never been a greater Enemy to any Passion than that silly one of Vanity.' The Gentleman smiled, and proceeded. (III. 3, pp. 214–15)

The 'Master-piece' remains unpublished in *Joseph Andrews*, and its author returns to his parsonage worth twenty three pounds a year in Book IV. Adams's return to the

parish and confrontation with his 'Patroness' Lady Booby entail a full dramatisation of the tensions in his relation to the Boobys. After the service on the morning after their simultaneous arrival in the parish, Adams is back in his old habitat, that is, the 'Kitchin', 'drinking her Ladyship's Health below in a Cup of her Ale', (IV. 2, p. 281), when he is summoned upstairs by Lady Booby.³⁶ Lady Booby's unusual condescension, in admitting Parson Adams into her chamber, is occasioned by his publication of banns of marriage for Joseph and Fanny (IV. 1, p. 280), and the nature of that condescension is rendered clear enough, when the 'Patroness', without introduction, openly presses her point thus:

'I wonder, Sir, after the many great Obligations you have had to this Family,' (with all which the Reader hath, in the Course of this History, been minutely acquainted) 'that you will ungratefully show any Respect to a Fellow who hath been turned out of it for his Misdeeds. Nor doth it, I can tell you, Sir, become a Man of your Character, to run about the Country with an idle Fellow and Wench.' (p. 281)

Lady Booby's is obviously not that 'well-guided Condescension' we have remarked with reference to Fielding's compliments to his patrons. Conscious or not of the 'many great Obligations' to the Boobys, Adams persists in defending his own opinion of the couple's character, which is by implication equal to defending his own character, too. Faced with Adams's tenacity, Lady Booby goes on to threaten the parson with these words: 'It is my Orders to you, that you publish these Banns no more; and if you dare, I will recommend it to your Master, the Doctor, to discard you from his Service. I will, Sir, notwithstanding your poor Family' (p. 283). The 'Patroness' makes it obnoxiously clear that it is in her power to divest Adams of his cassock, just as she stripped Joseph of his livery. Adams still perseveres against this downright threatening, and the tension between his material dependence on the

³⁶ Astrid Masetti Lobo Costa offers an account of the upstairs and downstairs movements in *Joseph Andrews* in terms of Fielding's 'appreciation for paired hierarchies', which she relates to the postmodern concept of spatial relativity in art and the inversion of traditional hierarchies in Bakhtinian carnivalesque: 'Up and Down Stairways: Escher, Bakhtin, and *Joseph Andrews*', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 31 (1991), 553-68.

Boobys and arguments for spiritual independence continues to be one of the focal points through the rest of the final book.

After all, Lady Booby is only a nominal 'Patroness', to whom, it is implied, Adams has no obligation to speak of. In this regard, Lady Booby parallels not only the 'Man of Quality' in Wilson's story but Walpole as recalled in the *Champion* essay, in that they are all such patrons as would regard themselves as conferring 'many great Obligations' on their dependants. Thus it is easier in a way for Adams to stand independent of Lady Booby than of young Squire Booby, Pamela's husband, who offers Adams a substantial 'Living of one hundred and thirty Pounds a Year', as we learn at the very end of the novel. Adams's reaction is significant enough:

He at first refused it, resolving not to quit his Parishioners, with whom he hath lived so long: But on recollecting he might keep a Curate at this Living, he hath been lately inducted into it. (IV. 16, p. 344)

In so far as a refusal is in itself an assertion of right, Adams's initial refusal to accept young Booby's favour, not unlike his refusal to succumb to Lady Booby's explicit 'Orders', suggests his independence, to which, it is implied, Adams will hold on, in his relationship with the new patron, too. Indeed Adams's understanding of that relationship can be inferred from his conduct towards his future patron during Joseph's marriage ceremony:

Adams [...] publicly rebuked Mr. *Booby* and *Pamela* for laughing in so sacred a Place, and so solemn an Occasion. Our Parson would have done no less to the highest Prince on Earth: For tho' he paid all Submission and Deference to his Superiors in other Matters, where the least Spice of Religion intervened, he immediately lost all Respect of Persons. It was his Maxim, That he was a Servant of the Highest, and could not, without departing from his Duty, give up the least Article of his Honour, or of his Cause, to the greatest earthly Potentate. Indeed he always asserted, that Mr. *Adams* at Church with his Surplice on, and Mr. *Adams* without that Ornament, in any other place, were two very different Persons. (p. 342)

That Adams receives a 'Living' under Booby's favour should not make a 'Domestic' of the parson. Adams within and without church are 'two very different Persons', and

to distinguish these is to detach his 'service' from the interest nexus between patron and patronised. As material payment cannot buy up a painter's authorial ownership, Booby's patronage should not interfere with Parson Adams's clerical service to the 'Highest'.

In both Adams's and Wilson's cases, the authors resent 'Attendance and Dependance on the Great'. Whether material encouragement is actually entailed or not, authors' 'Dependance on the Great' is regarded essentially as restriction. Both authors, sufficiently experienced in that rewardless but none the less mortifying dependence, seek to become independent by trying the 'Trade'. As remarked earlier, Adams's design to publish his sermons is implicitly related to his needy situation, which the Boobys fail to redress. Wilson, too, 'after about two Months spent in this disagreeable way with the utmost Mortification', that is, by 'Men of Quality', retires 'to a Garret near the Temple, [to] commence Hackney-writer to the Lawyers' (III. 3, p. 217). These 'Men of Business', however, prove no less enemies to 'Poets' than 'Men of Quality', as Wilson recalls thus: 'Whenever I durst venture to a Coffee-house, which was on *Sundays* only, a Whisper ran round the Room, which was constantly attended with a Sneer—*That's Poet Wilson*' (p. 217). Having earned nothing but the discerning that 'the lower Class of the Gentry, and the higher of the mercantile World [...] are in reality the worst bred part of Mankind' (pp. 217–18), Wilson then meets with a 'Bookseller', obviously belonging to the 'mercantile World', and becomes his hack through and through.

The Reputation of a Poet being my Bane, I accidentally became acquainted with a Bookseller, who told me 'it was a Pity a Man of my Learning and Genius should be obliged to such a Method of getting his Livelihood; that he had a Compassion for me, and if I would engage with him, he would undertake to provide handsomely for me.' A Man in my Circumstances, as he very well knew, had no Choice. I accordingly accepted his Proposal with his Conditions, which were none of the most favourable, and fell to translating with all my Might. I had no longer reason to lament the want of Business; for he furnished me with so much, that in half a Year I almost writ myself blind. I likewise contracted a Distemper by my sedentary Life, in which no part of my Body was exercised but my right Arm, which rendered me incapable of writing for a long time. This unluckily happening to delay the Publication of a Work, and my last Performance not having sold well, the Bookseller declined

any further Engagement, and aspersed me to his Brethren as a careless, idle Fellow. (p. 218)

Wilson's 'Service' to the bookseller is no more dignified than his 'Attendance on the Great', and authors like Wilson may indeed be justified in feeling deserted by unrewarding patrons and exploited by mercenary booksellers.

As we have remarked earlier, especially with reference to the hack authors in *The Author's Farce*, Fielding's portrayal of commercially implicated authors is not wholly disparaging or contemptuous. In this regard, it seems to me that descriptions of the 'lowest Trade' of 'Authoring' in *Joseph Andrews*, too, reflect Fielding's ambivalent concern for the status and right of authors involved in the commerce of authorship, rather than the pure sarcasm of an author absolutely above it. Now we return, with this in mind, to Book II, Chapter 1, where the 'Secret' or 'Art of dividing' is divulged by the Author, one of the insiders, 'us Gentlemen of the [...] Occupation', that is, the lowest 'Trade of Authoring'. It is only in comparison with the 'Secrets' of other tradesmen that the Author undertakes to illustrate 'this of dividing our Works into Books and Chapters' to 'common Readers', who

for want of being truly acquainted with this Secret, [...] imagine, that by this Art of dividing, we mean only to swell our Works to a much larger Bulk than they would otherwise be extended to. These several Places therefore in our Paper, which are filled with our Books and Chapters, are understood as so much Buckram, Stays, and Stay-tape in a Taylor's Bill, serving only to make up the Sum Total, commonly found at the Bottom of our first Page, and of his last. (p. 89)

The truth is to the contrary, the Author claims, for 'in this, as well as all other Instances, we consult the Advantage of our Reader, not our own'. By this 'Secret', an author accommodates the reader in the manner of an inn-keeper:

first, those little Spaces between our Chapters may be looked upon as an Inn or Resting-Place, where he may stop and take a Glass, or any other Refreshment, as it pleases him. Nay, our fine Readers will, perhaps, be scarce able to travel farther than through one of them in a Day. As to those vacant Pages which are placed between our Books, they are to be regarded as those

Stages, where, in long Journeys, the Traveller stays some time to repose himself, and consider of what he hath seen in the Parts he hath already past through; a Consideration which I take the Liberty to recommend a little to the Reader [...]. Secondly, What are the Contents prefixed to every Chapter, but so many Inscriptions over the Gates of Inns (to continue the same Metaphor,) informing the Reader what Entertainment he is to expect, which if he likes not, he may travel on to the next. (pp. 89–90)

The analogy between 'Authoring' and inn-keeping is habitual in Fielding, anticipating the author as 'Master of an Ordinary' in the 'Bill of Fare' chapter in *Tom Jones* on one hand and recalling the author as 'master of a public house' in the plays on the other. The present Author's claim that only the 'Advantage of our Reader' counts in the 'Art of dividing' accentuates its similarity to the lip-service slogan commonly upheld by every inn-keeper in Fielding's fiction, who embodies the relentless mercenary spirit of the times. A 'dividing' author is essentially a public caterer: 'it becomes an Author generally to divide a Book, as it doth a Butcher to joint his Meat, for such Assistance is of great help to both the Reader and the Carver' (p. 92). After all, the 'Art of dividing' is to the benefit of both reader and author, for the commercial author lives by accommodating and catering for the reader. The same 'Art' or 'Secret' can be justly called the 'Art of thriving' in the 'Trade of Authoring' ('An Essay on Knowledge of Characters of Men', *Miscellanies; Volume One*, pp. 154–55).

The same 'Secret' has the 'Sanction of great Antiquity', for it is a custom, according to the Author of *Joseph Andrews*, founded by no less an authority than Homer, whose exemplar was followed by Virgil and Milton among others. The present Author's ironic reconstruction of Homer's invention of the 'Art' is particularly interesting as a pointed recapitulation of related customs in the current trade of 'Authoring'.

Homer not only divided his great Work into twenty-four Books, (in Compliment perhaps to the twenty-four Letters to which he had very particular Obligations) but, according to the Opinion of some very sagacious Critics, hawked them all separately, delivering only one Book at a Time, (probably by Subscription). He was the first Inventor of the Art which hath so long lain dormant, of publishing by Numbers, an Art now brought to such Perfection, that even Dictionaries are divided and exhibited piece-meal to the Public; nay, one Bookseller hath (*to encourage Learning and ease the Public*)

contrived to give them a Dictionary in this divided Manner for only fifteen Shillings more than it would have cost entire. (pp. 90–91)

Strictly speaking, what is depicted here is less relevant to authors themselves than to their ‘sagacious’ booksellers. The reference to Homer, in fact, is deliberately misleading, for it was well established among Fielding’s contemporaries that, as observed in Thomas Parnell’s prefix to Pope’s *Iliad*, it was Pisistratus who first published Homer’s scattered poems in the present arrangement (*Joseph Andrews*, p. 91n). The delayed reference to ‘one Bookseller’ makes it clearer that we are not so much dealing with the ‘Art of dividing’ by authors themselves as that of ‘publishing by Numbers’ and matching methods of advertising and distributing, employed by contemporary booksellers. This latter ‘Art’ is an ‘Art of thriving’ for booksellers, and it was not the poet who profited, for example, from the publication of *Paradise Lost*, in however many books, the copy of which was sold for five pounds in all (Kernan, p. 103). The advent of the method of publishing by subscription in the early eighteenth century should be approached in terms of its benefits to booksellers as well as to authors, even though Pope’s outstandingly successful publication of his *Homer* by subscription contributed to the tendency to ignore more or less its advantages to booksellers. In dealing with subscribed authors, booksellers were able to minimise the risk of loss, first because the costs involved were covered beforehand, and secondly because not only was the sale of some copies guaranteed but the lists of subscribers were in themselves excellent advertisements to the public. As I have remarked with regard to Bookweight’s mention of this method to Luckless in *The Author’s Farce* (II. 6), it is possible that another envious allusion to Pope’s exceptional success is imbedded in the present references to Homer and to the very method by which Pope published his translations of the very poet. With or without Pope in the background, this part of the chapter calls attention to the self-interested conduct of booksellers, in the guise of public service (‘to encourage Learning and ease the Public’), and subtly imputes to them the commercially motivated custom of ‘Divisions in Authors’.

As a whole, the chapter registers, in Reed's words, the 'displacement of literary authority into the realm of commercial enterprise' (p. 134). It is not correct to say that Fielding endorses this 'displacement'. Nevertheless, it is sensible to argue that Fielding reveals great concern for the right of authors in the commerce controlled by booksellers, as well as in their relationship with patrons. After all, commercialism is firmly entrenched in the republic of letters, to the extent that names of dedicatees and lists of subscribers serve as advertisements. If so, why should authors like Milton be deprived of their due rewards, while booksellers are fattening themselves? After the 'worst', that is, 'Attendance and Dependence on the Great', commercial engagement might be less 'mortifying' than that, but that it subjects authors to a different form of attendance and undue deprivation. Yet another problem faces authors, threatening to turn them into tailors or caterers of letters. To cope with these problems in setting up as a 'Romance Writer', Fielding begins by coating his new venture with some colour of literary authority, borrowed from established genres and writers, as we shall see in the following section.

5. 'A comic Romance is a comic Epic-Poem in Prose'

Criticism of 'High Life' and 'High People' is integral to the genre of *Joseph Andrews*. Thus 'a comic Romance' differs from the 'serious Romance' in its 'Characters, by introducing Persons of inferiour Rank, and consequently of inferiour Manners, whereas the grave Romance, sets the highest before us' (Preface, p. 4). Appropriately, *Joseph Andrews* ends with the curious remark that Joseph 'declares he will imitate them [his parents] in their Retirement; nor will be prevailed on by any Booksellers, or their Authors, to make his Appearance in High-Life' (IV. 16, p. 344). This is, for one thing, meant as a dig at *Pamela* and its sequels, which betrayed the original author and his rival booksellers as eager to capitalise upon the phenomenal success of the original by extending Pamela's story 'In her EXALTED CONDITION', 'In GENTEEL LIFE', or in 'High Life' (p. 344n). Apart from the parodic intent, though, a self-

contradiction seems to arise from the ending of *Joseph Andrews*: how could this 'authentic History' show up in public in the first place, if Joseph insisted on remaining in 'Retirement'? Who is the Author that apparently gloats over (and profits by) his exclusive right to publish Joseph's life, whether 'in High Life' or not? Of this quizzical posing by the Author, Cruise writes as follows:

This statement is curious for it manifests Joseph's first awareness of an audience and tells of a life lived beyond the covers of his biography. [...] Our worst possible imaginings have him venturing out and contracting for an author, so that he can secure his best commercial property—himself—and capitalize upon his adventures. If we wish to preserve Joseph's innocence, and there is no good reason not to, blame shifts to where it rightly belongs, to the narrator contradicting himself and for giving the appearance of an unauthorized biography. (pp. 269–70)

Cruise's 'imaginings' are a little farfetched and reveal some confusion in failing to perceive that, according to the letters of the statement, what Joseph will not allow to appear in public is not the story up to his retirement and restoration to his genteel identity (i.e. *Joseph Andrews*) but another story that would feature Joseph 'Wilson' the gentleman. At least technically, the present biography is not necessarily 'an unauthorized biography' as Cruise suspects its Author of publishing, although at least the 'appearance' of such is confusingly there. It is indeed a tricky distinction to make, and what seems to me more material is not whether or not *Joseph Andrews* is 'authorized' by Joseph, but in what way the biography of a footman could persuade its reader that it is worth reading.

Whereas romance was an established and essentially aristocratic genre, a 'comic Romance' like *Joseph Andrews*, not simply depicting 'Persons of inferiour Rank, and consequently of inferiour Manners' but explicitly denouncing 'High Life', was a new species of writing, critically 'unauthorized' either by literary traditions or by the ideology of 'High People'. As demonstrated in the preceding section, the unequal relation of authors to 'High People' or authorities in politics imposes serious limitations upon the dependent authors, so that it is essential for them to get both financially and ideologically independent of the great. As a potential solution, a new

kind of writing, commercially viable and least concerned with the interests and ideology of the great, would be preferable, but that it raises questions of literary authority. It is no coincidence, it can be argued, that the most serious of Fielding's efforts to define a new dignified genre is associated with *Joseph Andrews*. What is more remarkable is that, in seeking to appropriate the 'authority' of various literary authorities to his 'legitimizing or authorizing activity' in *Joseph Andrews*, Fielding reveals not a little ambivalence towards them, too. In the present section, I shall focus on Fielding's problematic leaning on literary authorities, especially Cervantes in the title-page and Homer and Aristotle in the preface and in several other contexts, and the no less problematic contention with allegedly negative exemplars, particularly Samuel Richardson, who proved at least that the story of a servant girl could read and sell sensationally.

As briefly mentioned in the preceding section, the first and second editions of *Joseph Andrews* appeared in public bearing only the 'name' of Cervantes on the title-page, though Fielding's authorship, as Battestin says, was 'an open secret' (General Introduction, p. xxix). It points to, among others, Fielding's consciousness of the problematic category of his new writing, more commonly associated with such names as Eliza Haywood and her likes than that of Cervantes. In *The Pleasures of the Town*, Luckless's puppet-show within *The Author's Farce*, Fielding had ridiculed Haywood as 'Mrs. Novel' (p. 45n, and Appendix B, p. 103). 'Cervantes' is an 'authorizing' name, which is to *Joseph Andrews* what the names of the Scriblerians were to Fielding's *Masquerade* (by 'Lemuel Gulliver') and the plays of the early 1730s (by '(H.) Scriblerus Secundus'). However, as Walter L. Reed shows in detail, the English attitude to Cervantes and *Don Quixote* was in itself controversial and much less admiring than the French counterpart.³⁷ Of 'the authority of Cervantes' among Fielding's contemporaries, Reed maintains that it is 'an authority which challenges the traditionalism of neoclassical poetics itself', the traditionalism Fielding seems to

³⁷ See Walter L. Reed, *An Exemplary History of the Novel: The Quixotic and the Picaresque* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1981), Ch. 6.

champion in the preface (p. 125).³⁸ On top of this 'ambiguous' authority of Cervantes, Reed establishes that *Joseph Andrews* contains less imitations than deviations from *Don Quixote*, in both ethical and formal terms (pp. 125–32). Fielding's 'imitation of *Don Quixote*', says Reed, 'is divided against itself' and 'assumes a freedom to revise and improve upon his original' (pp. 125, 130).³⁹ It is uncertain whether Fielding was the more attracted to Cervantes for his 'ambiguous' achievement, and no less so whether he meant it in claiming on the title-page that *Joseph Andrews* is 'written in Imitation of the Manner of Cervantes'. After all, it is a gesture, more than anything else, meant to appropriate the more or less established esteem of the author for the authorisation of an unestablished genre, with which his achievement in *Don Quixote* can be most easily associated.

Fielding's brief and ambiguous leaning on Cervantes is replaced by a prolonged discourse on Homer and Aristotle in the celebrated preface to *Joseph Andrews*. In general, the preface has been regarded as Fielding's authoritative manifesto of the new species of writing, of which 'the manner [...] is entirely serious, without irony or facetiousness'.⁴⁰ Recent critics, however, are more interested in the fact that coming as it does in the course of a series of prefatory pronouncements, the preface 'claims', instead of verifying, the generic authority of the new species of writing. With other prefatory chapters, the preface purports to carry out in *Joseph Andrews* what Michael McKeon terms the 'project in epistemological and generic categorization'.⁴¹ With reference to the 'instability of its genre', the first of the 'three elements of *Joseph Andrews* [that] seem to threaten its claim to narrative authority',⁴² Knight also remarks as follows:

³⁸ See also Kenney, p. 78, and Charles A. Knight, 'Joseph Andrews and the Failure of Authority', *Eighteenth Century Fiction*, 4 (1992), 109–24 (pp. 111–17).

³⁹ Knight also refers to the conflicts between the romantic plot and the 'open, Cervantic structure' in *Joseph Andrews* (esp. pp. 112–13).

⁴⁰ Homer Goldberg, *The Art of Joseph Andrews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 269n.

⁴¹ Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600–1740* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 405.

⁴² The other two elements are: 'the unreliability of its narrator, and the ironies of its ending' (p. 110).

Fielding's critical pronouncements on the genre of *Joseph Andrews* manifest his authority in several ways: he parodies Richardson to establish authority through contrast; he asserts the realism of his own material and thus the naturalness of his authority; he articulates generic terms that are familiar to readers and verify his authority by reference to tradition. His useful classical precedents lead to overlapping terms. Hence his Preface asserts that his novel is a 'comic Romance' (from Scarron's *Roman Comique*) that is in turn 'a comic Epic-Poem in Prose', and he goes on to analyse these terms, especially 'comedy.' His classifications seek to place the novel among the familiar and to account for its novelty. The Preface and the introductory chapters to the first three books trace the relationship of his new form to Homer's *Odyssey* and Fénelon's *Télémaque*, to French romance, and to histories and biographies. (pp. 110–11)

None of these manoeuvrings, however, confirm the generic authority of *Joseph Andrews* so much as they display Fielding's anxiety about its lack. Moreover, the authorising 'project' almost cancels itself by its own surfeit, as different classifications contradict one another and the story proper drifts away from critical pronouncements.

Alongside Fielding's ambiguous claim to the Cervantic imitation, references to Homer and Aristotle in the preface help point to the 'tension between authority and originality' in *Joseph Andrews* (Kenney, p. 84). In her rereading of the preface, Kenney accurately grasps the 'imagery of paternity' underlying the 'legitimizing or authorizing activity' of Fielding's critical enunciations.

The authority which legitimates the enterprise is identified partly through imagery of paternity—the text is a lawfully begotten offspring, descended from Homer, the great father—and partly through allusion to a critical tradition established by Aristotle—the text is law abiding and conforms to accepted rules. (p. 78)

In this regard, the preface is an attempt to establish the literary parentage of *Joseph Andrews*. Interestingly, the novel, too, is given two fathers, Homer and Aristotle, like its hero Joseph Andrews/Wilson, which in fact accentuates its uncertain paternity. Moreover, the actual legitimating document, the comic epic by Homer is 'entirely lost' (p. 3), as the 'Words' of the ancient Andrew's epitaph are 'almost out of the Stone with Antiquity' (I. 2, p. 20). As for the authority of Aristotle, the preface also

undermines its own 'authorizing' enterprise, by calling attention to what he failed to do.

It may seem remarkable, that *Aristotle*, who is so fond and free of Definitions, hath not thought proper to define the Ridiculous. Indeed, where he tells us it is proper to Comedy, he hath remarked that Villainy is not its object: but he hath not, as I remember, positively asserted what is. (p. 7)

Given the affirmation that 'the Ridiculous only' is the proper subject of *Joseph Andrews* (p. 7), Aristotle's failure to define the true 'Ridiculous' renders his authority awkward to rely on. In both cases, as Kenney rightly puts it, Fielding 'actually points to an empty spot on the family tree as the source of his authority' (p. 81). What is said of Joseph's ancestry is exactly true of the literary ancestry of *Joseph Andrews*: it has 'sprung up [...] out of a Dunghill'.

As the novel opens officially, we come across yet another introductory chapter, 'Of writing Lives', the last of the present series of authorising activities. Now *Joseph Andrews* is lined up with ancient and modern biographies of 'great and worthy Persons of both Sexes':

Not to mention those antient Writers which of late days are little read, being written in obsolete, and, as they are generally thought, unintelligible Languages; such as *Plutarch*, *Nepos*, and others which I heard of in my Youth; our own Language affords many of excellent Use and Instruction, finely calculated to sow the Seeds of Virtue in Youth, and very easy to be comprehended by Persons of moderate Capacity. Such are the History of *John the Great*, who, by his brave and heroic Actions against Men of large and athletic Bodies, obtained the glorious Appellation of the Giant-killer; that of an Earl of *Warwick*, whose Christian Name was *Guy*; the Lives of *Argalus* and *Parthenia*, and above all, the History of those seven worthy Personages, the Champions of Christendom. (I. 1, pp. 17–18)

Uppermost in the Author's mind, though, are the 'Lives of Mr. *Colley Cibber*, and of Mrs. *Pamela Andrews*' (pp. 18–19), which, it is implied, fall within the vernacular tradition. Thus Bell argues that 'the as-yet-unidentified writer of *Joseph Andrews* tries to establish suitably dignified and legitimate literary precedents for his own "authoring" activities, provocatively placed alongside the rather less dignified and

illegitimate ones provided for theirs' (p. 79). In view of the well-established notoriety of Cibber's linguistic awkwardness, a perennial topic of good fun among Fielding's contemporaries, and the less than classical literary background of Fielding's 'low-brow interloper and rival', as Bell puts it (p. 66), it is possible that Fielding, in the above passage, is attempting to establish his 'own cultural authority' as a writer well educated in classics written in languages 'unintelligible' to the others. Even so, it is only furtively rather than obtrusively alluded to through an insinuation of the present Author's knowledge of ancient biographies 'such as *Plutarch*, *Nepos*, and others which I heard of in my Youth'. Moreover, such knowledge is of little consequence to 'Persons of moderate Capacity', who are supposed to be constituting the majority of the readers of this vernacular biography of a footman. Granted that Fielding tries 'identifying who and who may not legitimately lay claim to cultural authority' and 'moral authority required for "Instruction"' (Bell, pp. 66, 81), those 'Persons of moderate Capacity' and even most people of quality have applauded Richardson's *Pamela* with near unanimity. Richardson has at least established an exemplar of commercial success with his own new species of writing, and more importantly, demonstrated that the history of a servant girl, not 'great and worthy Persons', is capable of attaining moral currency. Without endorsing Pamelan morality, Fielding recognises that the 'great and worthy' can no longer provide moral guidance.

Finally, we can read Fielding's effort to disengage his authorial identity from the great, literary or political, in his highly problematic comment on the 'great Poet' Pope in *Joseph Andrews* (III. 6, p. 235). Significantly enough, it is incorporated in Joseph's 'moral Reflections' thus:

Some Gentlemen of our Cloth report charitable Actions done by their Lords and Masters, and I have heard 'Squire *Pope*, the great Poet, at my Lady's Table, tell Stories of a Man that lived at a Place called *Ross*, and another at the *Bath*, one *Al—Al—I* forget his Name, but it is in the Book of Verses. [...] It was his Charity that put him in the Book, where the 'Squire says he puts all those who deserve it; and to be sure, as he lives among all the great People, if there were any such, he would know them. (p. 235)

Fielding's attitude to the 'great Poet' is always ambivalent, betraying mixed feelings of admiration, envy, sense of belatedness, and so forth. In this particular context, his apparent homage to the 'great Poet' surreptitiously underlines his attendance at the tables of the great, including Lady Booby herself, which can imply his attendance 'on' them as well as free and equal conversation with them. It is not impossible that Fielding refers to the fact, taking it as a compliment to himself, that he was with the 'great Poet' at Allen's table at Bath, but the context renders his self-awareness problematic towards both the 'great Folks' and the 'great Poet' who supposedly 'lives among' them. Fielding's sympathies are less with the 'great Poet' at Lady Booby's table than with the dismissed footman.

Chapter IV. The 'Right' of a Foundling

As the known pension'd Scribler for the M—try, the Author of *The Jacobite's Journal*, has this Day openly thrown off the Mask, and declar'd himself an Advocate for taking away the *Liberty of the Press*, Mankind can no longer doubt of the Designs of his Patrons.

London Evening Post (12–15 March 1748)

The *Justice* affects to call his aforesaid *Labours of some Years of his Life*, an History. [...] Is this [motely History of Bastardism, Fornication and Adultery], Sir, 'the sincere Endeavours of your Author in recommending Goodness and Innocence?'

'Aretine' to 'Selim Slim' (George Lyttelton), *Old England* (27 May 1749)

Sir, without your Assistance this History had never been completed. Be not startled at the Assertion. I do not intend to draw on you the Suspicion of being a Romance Writer. I mean no more than that I partly owe to you my Existence during great Part of the Time which I have employed in composing it. [...] I am not to give up my Right to your Protection and Patronage, because you have commended my Book.

Dedication to George Lyttelton, *Tom Jones*

Over the years between 1742 and 1749, that is, between the publications of *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*, Fielding's career underwent a dramatic transformation through a series of political turmoils: the entrance of Fielding's 'Patriot' patrons into the Pelham ministry in the last months of 1744, the 'Forty-Five', the ministerial crisis and consolidation of the Pelhams and Patriots in February 1746, and subsequent conflicts concerning the ministry's peace policies that led to the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in April 1748. By the time he was writing anti-Jacobite pamphlets in October and essays for *The True Patriot* from 5 November 1745, Fielding had come back to openly partisan writing, now as 'Champion' of the ministry, not of the opposition. Given the threats of the Forty-Five, Fielding's editorship of *The True Patriot* (5 November 1745–17 June 1746) met with relatively little opposition 'for obvious reasons', whereas he suffered a load of vilification as 'the known pension'd Scribler for the M—try' during his editorship of *The Jacobite's Journal* (5 December 1747–5 November 1748).¹ The question of material rewards aside, Fielding's new

¹ See *The True Patriot and Related Writings*, ed. by W. B. Coley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), General Introduction, p. lxviii, and *The Jacobite's Journal and Related Writings*, ed. by W. B. Coley

role as apologist for the ministry inevitably put him in a vulnerable position, particularly because of his 'conversion' to the administration (*The Jacobite's Journal*, General Introduction, p. lxxv). Ironically, the same condemnations as Fielding himself had passed on the 'Gazetteers' in the anti-Walpole plays and the *Champion* essays were now showered on his head, and what is worse, accusations of political inconstancy were added to those of simple mercenariness. Obviously, the extraordinary vehemence and virulence of the calumnies by his enemies seriously upset Fielding, whose next novel, not to mention *The Jacobite's Journal* itself, would become particularly concerned about such questions as the preservation or vilification of names, characters, and the like.

In fighting the public battles in defence of his patrons, particularly George Lyttelton, his so-called 'Paymaster', and his own self, Fielding was divided within himself. Back in the political press, he had to cope with the old problem of writing to the dictation of political exigencies, which as we have seen he had explicitly denounced as ill-paid hack work for politicians, whether in the opposition or in the administration. He had, in *Joseph Andrews* in particular, pressed the ideal of independent authorship free from the financial and ideological 'Attendance on the Great'. In this regard, Fielding's appointment to magistracy in October 1748, bringing *The Jacobite's Journal* to a period in the following month, made it out of the question for him to deny receiving material encouragement from his patrons, which hardly seemed to agree with his aesthetic ideal. Thus Fielding's essays in the ministerial journals already show marked efforts to disengage himself from the duties required of a (paid) apologist for the ministry. In *Tom Jones*, which, in spite of the vestiges of Fielding's anti-Jacobite propaganda therein, cannot be thought a ministerial document or anything of that sort, similar tensions assert themselves in the very dedication to Lyttelton and further in the characterisation of Tom's patron Allworthy, modelled mainly on Lyttelton, and the ensuing drama between the patron and the foundling

(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), General Introduction, pp. lxxv-lxxxii. Further references to these editions are given after quotations in the text.

protégé. Fielding's maturing notion of literary authority, as I shall discuss in the last section of the present chapter, can be approached by analysing the way he copes with those tensions.

1. The Price of a Ministerial Writer

In describing the emerging government press under the Harley ministry, Downie divides political writers 'in the age of Swift and Defoe' into three categories: (1) 'the gentleman-writer who dabbled in political literature'; (2) 'the ordinary party scribbler [...] who made, or tried to make their living out of their writings'; and (3) 'the true hack in the mires of Grub Street' (*Harley*, pp. 12–14). According to Downie, Swift belonged to the first category, along with Atterbury, Bolingbroke, and Prior on the Tory side, and Addison and Steele on the Whig side. Defoe was of the second category, if an outstanding figure in the 'gallery of "dunces"' registered in *The Dunciad*. The third comprised 'unknown scribblers [...] of volumes of undistinguished (and largely undistinguishable) political pamphlets, broadsheets and poems', who cannot be ignored, though undistinguished individually, in any account of the overwhelming output of the political press in the early eighteenth century (p. 14).

What then was the scale of rewards for the different categories of writers? There is obviously no way of estimating this for the third group of anonymous hacks. Of the second group, Defoe originally went into Harley's service when the minister's intervention delivered him from Newgate, where he was imprisoned after standing in the pillory three times for writing *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*. He wrote the *Review* in behalf of his patron and received £400 a year from 1707 to 1714 in return for the service (Hanson, pp. 95–96), although

even with his 'quarterly' £100 he was often in debt. He was in at least three different prisons, Newgate, the Fleet and the Queen's Bench, on at least five separate occasions. Without his lucrative subsidy from the government

throughout the reign of Queen Anne he would have been in dire straits. As it was he could hardly keep his head above the water. (Downie, *Harley*, p. 13)

Nevertheless, throughout his editorship of the *Review* and even after his 'close connexion' with Harley became an 'open secret', Defoe 'consistently denied that he was the paid henchman of Harley' (Hanson, p. 95).

When Swift took over the editorship of *The Examiner*, 'Harley bought Swift's services at the cost of £1,000 a year from the privy purse' remitted to the Church of Ireland, not to the author himself.

In return Swift received neither the 'lean Bishoprick or [...] fat Deanery' in England that Harley had promised him nor even a word of appreciation from the Irish hierarchy for the success of his mission. 'And this was the first time I began to conceive some imperfect Idea of Courts and Ministers', Gulliver observed.²

After all his 'success with the *Examiner* he was still no more than the vicar of Laracor'.³ It was not until April 1713, one month after the signing of the Peace of Utrecht, that 'Swift's own preferment' materialised in the form of the 'deanery of St. Patrick's, Dublin, a bitter disappointment to his hopes for a settlement in England' (Lock, p. 142). As regards the fabrication by Bolingbroke that 'Swift was simply a hired writer', Ellis says that the 'great distance between Swift and the hired writers', like Defoe, for example, 'can be measured by the fact that Swift, at his own insistence, was *not* paid and by the fact that he was invited to join the Saturday Club ten days after Harley had made the generous mistake of offering to pay him' (Introduction, pp. xxviii–xxix). As remarked earlier, though, both Harley's initial offer, 'generous' or not, and Bolingbroke's fabrication as such seem to me to point to their predisposition to treat Swift as one of the 'hired writers', whatever his endowments and reputation created by the earlier writings. Potentially mortifying was

² *Swift vs. Mainwaring: The Examiner and The Medley*, ed. by Frank H. Ellis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), Introduction, p. xxv.

³ F. P. Lock, 'Swift and English Politics, 1701–14', in *The Character of Swift's Satire: A Revised Focus*, ed. by Claude Rawson (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1983), pp. 127–50 (p. 135).

the distance between an Irish parson and author and his minister-patrons, which was not less 'great' than that between him and mere 'hired writers'. In this regard, Downie's grouping of Swift and Bolingbroke together among the gentlemen-writers who 'dabbled in political literature' needs some qualification.

Addison's *Freeholder* is to the 1715 Jacobite Rising what Fielding's *True Patriot* is to the Forty-Five. Bolingbroke makes another appearance here, claiming that 'Addison's appointment as Secretary of State in 1717 was a reward for his *Freeholder* essays'.⁴ It should be noted that unlike his allegation concerning Swift, who wrote for the Tory ministry, this against Addison, champion of Sunderland's Whig ministry which replaced the Harley-Bolingbroke ministry, is more likely to have been inspired by opposition polemics than by factual evidence. It was an anticipation of the anti-Walpole propaganda Bolingbroke would mastermind in *The Craftsman* afterwards. Besides, James Leheny questions the allegation by pointing out that the 'complexity of political advancements makes it doubtful that an appointment to such high ministerial office would be made that simply' (p. 29). In all probability, Addison's advancement from 'Freeholder' to Secretary of State, the very post held by Bolingbroke in the last years of Anne's reign, indicates that 'the ministry was not displeased with its lute', who was from the outset chosen at a much higher level than Walpole's 'mediocrities'.

Polemic exaggeration by the opposition press notwithstanding, it appears that Walpole's mercenaries of 'mediocre' talents served the ministry at 'mediocre' rates. Downie demonstrates with examples that 'there were three principal kinds of patronage: appointment to an office of power or profit; endowment of a regular pension or salary; and unambiguous remuneration in the form of hard cash' (Downie, 'Walpole', p. 174). The careers of Benjamin Hoadly from the clerical order and Hervey from the secular attest the first (pp. 174–75), but as Hervey himself remarked with regret, none of the writers of this rank in Walpole's camp 'were concerned in the

⁴ Joseph Addison, *The Freeholder*, ed. by James Leheny (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), Introduction, p. 29.

weekly papers, which being only written for hire, gave the readers as little pleasure, as they did service to their paymasters' (Hanson, p. 117). Writers at such levels of remuneration tended to be pamphleteers rather than weekly journalists, the latter inferior in esteem (and therefore in reward too) to the former, since 'the pamphlet provided a more effective means of propaganda than the newspaper well into the eighteenth century' (Hanson, p. 92; see also Black, pp. 145–46).

Below this level, distinctions between the rewards by pension and by hard cash seem less clear-cut. 'A hired Scribler in the *Daily Courant*' (*The Dunciad Variorum*, II, 130n), Matthew Concanen was lucky enough to become Attorney General of Jamaica in 1732 (Downie, p. 177). Yet, the case of William Arnall, Downie argues, 'best illustrates the character of the Great Man's patronage' partly by a pension and partly 'in the form of hard cash' (p. 179). Arnall was paid a pension of £400 a year (the same amount as Defoe received from Harley), and the Parliamentary Committee of Secrecy after Walpole's fall revealed that in all Arnall 'received nearly £11,000 in the span of four years' (Hanson, p. 113; see also Downie, p. 179). The sum, according to Downie, was probably 'to defray production costs of the *Free Briton*, and to distribute amongst those involved in writing Walpole's newspapers', and Arnall's attempt to seek a permanent provision was unsuccessful (p. 179).

Even less known are the names and prices of individual writers engaged in *The Daily Gazetteer*, which replaced all ministerial papers in 1735, with the vigour of the opposition press noticeably in decline. What is least likely is that the 'Gazetteers', always referred to collectively, were better provided for than their predecessors in several papers, for Walpole meant to 'cut his sponsorship of the government press' by coalescing all government-subsidised papers into a single ministerial organ and 'did not greatly increase it even when challenged by new opposition journals like *Common Sense* and *The Champion*' (Downie, p. 179, and Hanson, p. 115). Regardless of the actual recompense, the Gazetteers were most amply paid in terms of the opposition's sneering attention. While in opposition, Fielding was certainly not behind in attacking them. Not long after the appearance of the *Gazetteer*, Fielding inserted in *Trapwit's*

Election an exchange between 'Miss Mayoress' and 'Miss Stitch', readers of the *Gazetteer* and *Craftsman* respectively:

MISS MAYORESS Pray, Miss, sit down. Well, have you any News in Town?
 MISS STITCH I don't know, my Dear; for I have not been out these three Days;
 and I have been imploy'd all that time in reading one of the *Craftsmen*;
 'tis a very pretty one; I have almost got it by Heart. [...] But I ask your
 Pardon, my Dear, I know you never read it.
 MISS MAYORESS No, Madam, I have enough to do to read the *Daily
 Gazetteer*. My Father has six of 'em sent him every Week, for nothing;
 they are very pretty Papers, and I wish you would read them, Miss. [...]
 MISS STITCH Perhaps, Madam, I have a Heart as warm in the Interest of my
 Country as you can have; tho' I pay Money for the Papers I read,
 Madam, and that's more than you can say.
 MISS MAYORESS Miss, Miss, my Papers are paid for too by somebody, tho'
 I don't pay for them. (*Pasquin*, II, pp. 25–26)

A similar dig at the government-subsidised distribution of *The Daily Gazetteer* is found in the dedication of *The Historical Register*, when Fielding ironically defends himself against an article in the paper that 'has represented the Historical Register as aiming [...] to overthrow the m—y'.

If this suggestion had been inserted in *The Craftsman* or *Common Sense*, or any of those papers which nobody reads, it might have past unanswered, but as it appears in a paper of so general a reception as *The Gazetteer*, which lies in the window of almost every post-house in England, it behooves me, I think, in the most serious manner, to vindicate myself from aspersions of so evil a tendency to my future prospects. (69)

It is also the 'Gazetteers' that Pillage means by the 'scriblers who for hire | Would write away their country's liberties', to which the 'Muse' replies as follows:

Oh, name not wretches so below the muse.
 No, my dear Pillage, sooner will I whet
 The ordinary of Newgate's leaden quill,
 Sooner will I indite the annual verse
 Which city bellmen or court laureates sing,
 Sooner with thee in humble garret dwell,
 And thou, or else thy muse disclaims thy pen,
 Wouldst sooner starve, ay, even in prison starve,
 Than vindicate oppression for thy bread,
 Or write down liberty to gain thy own.
 (*Eurydice Hissed*, 242)

It is a great irony that Fielding found himself, 'the known pension'd Scribler for the M—try', at the receiving end of sneers of the same cast about a decade later. To apply Downie's categorisation of the classes and prices of political writers to Fielding's time, he belonged somewhere between the first and the second category. Though a sort of gentleman-writer by birth and education rather than anything else, Fielding was far from 'dabbling' in political writings and his fortune was barely above that of those 'who made, or tried to make their living out of their writings'. Disputes persist as to whether or how or how much he was paid in return for his services to the Pelham ministry. W. B. Coley, editor of the Wesleyan *True Patriot* and *Jacobite's Journal*, is as always tender for Fielding's integrity as author, and if anything, against the 'hypothesis of government subvention' to *The True Patriot*: 'the heightened, self-pitying tone of unrequitedness in the final two numbers of the *True Patriot* almost certainly results from Fielding's failure to gain either a place or a pension for his labours on the paper' (General Introduction, p. lxviii). As for *The Jacobite's Journal*, Coley 'is forced to record' the charge by Fielding's enemies that '2,000 copies of each number were taken off by the government and given free distribution throughout England and Ireland by the Post Office' (p. liv). Still Coley's persistent emphasis on the 'absence of hard data' or even any 'quasi-official evidence' regarding the subsidisation of *The Jacobite's Journal* leads only to an 'open' conclusion: 'whether Fielding got any direct, regular subsidy from the Pelhams for it remains an open question' (pp. liv–lv). After all, Coley is the one who has been denying Fielding's receipt of Walpole's money sometime before the publication of *The Opposition: A Vision*, on the ground of Horace Walpole's silence as to the matter. Quite contrary to Coley, Cleary shows little doubt about government subsidies to both journals. It seems necessary at this stage to compare the different views of government subsidy held by these two critics. Cleary's definition construes as the 'usual way' of government subsidy the overall process in which ministries 'buy up a certain number of copies and ensure their free distribution throughout the

kingdom by post' (p. 208), whereas Coley seems to take into consideration only 'direct' rewards made to authors. Cleary, too, agrees that 'there is no concrete evidence, and it is unlikely [Fielding] was paid directly, by the issue', which does not deter him from arguing that 'at least *The True Patriot* was subsidized in the usual way' as explained above: 'It is hard to picture *The True Patriot*, which lasted nine months, as a profitable or even viable venture for author or publisher without a good deal of financial aid' (p. 208). It is true that Fielding's enemies went as far as to claim that he was 'paid a weekly fee of two and a half guineas' for editing *The Jacobite's Journal* (Battestin, *Life*, p. 426), but neither Coley nor Cleary countenances such an allegation. As regards the claim, also by Fielding's enemies, that *The Jacobite's Journal* was subsidised 'with secret service funds, channelled through Lyttelton, Fielding's "Paymaster"' and 2,000 copies of each issue were distributed gratis by the government, Cleary says that Fielding 'never specifically denied it and I accept it' (p. 243).

As most critics agree, *The Jacobite's Journal* was the 'only ministerial organ of this period' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 426; see also Hanson, p. 119, and Coley, General Introduction, p. lv). Above all, the 'solid reward' for his services as editor of the journal came in the form of an appointment, through the Duke of Bedford's recommendation, to the London magistracy, even before the official discontinuance of the journal, which attested its 'value to the ministry'. It was the first and last 'solid' acknowledgement of Fielding's loyalty to his patrons through opposition to ministerial years, which had 'eluded him in 1737, 1741-42, and even 1746 and 1747' (Cleary, p. 243). Fielding was 'signing recognizances as a Justice of the Peace at least as early as 2 November 1748', that is, three days prior to the coming out of the final number of *The Jacobite's Journal* (pp. 425-26n), or as late as after thirteen years' service to his patrons and just six years prior to his death.

A London magistracy is at best a pale shadow compared with the post of the Secretary of State which was Addison's reward after, not to say owing to, his service to the Sunderland ministry with *The Freeholder*. His gratitude to Bedford and

Lyttelton notwithstanding, Fielding would later style the stipend of 'Justice Business' as the 'dirtiest money upon earth', amounting to some £300 a year, £500 minus wages payable to his clerk (*The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*, Introduction, p. 26). In terms of the amount of money alone, Fielding's magistracy hardly paid him better than Arnall's pension from Walpole. Even so, Fielding's enemies in the opposition press concentrated on vilifying his preferment 'from Grubstreet into the Verge of Court', and as Coley puts it, 'linked the "low" nature of the appointment to Lyttelton's supposed dissatisfaction' with Fielding's services (*The Jacobite's Journal*, pp. 425–26n). Ironically, such malicious jeering at the "low" nature of the appointment', though it was meant to disfigure the 'pension'd Scribler' by all means, was nonetheless a poignant reminder of the 'low' price of a ministerial writer.

2. Apology for 'the known pension'd Scribler for the M—try':

The True Patriot and The Jacobite's Journal

Whatever the rewards, there is no questioning that *The True Patriot* and *The Jacobite's Journal* stood in support and apology for the Pelham ministry. Their top issues were: the expulsion of Carteret (now the Earl of Granville) from power, so that the then insecure Pelham ministry could establish themselves with George II and thus effectively cope with the threats of the Forty-Five and conduct the War with Spain (*The True Patriot*); and the support of the ministry's peace policy through the negotiations and signing of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle that finally ended the war and obtained from France an acceptance of the Hanoverian establishment (*The Jacobite's Journal*).⁵

The True Patriot, Battestin affirms, was 'not an official organ of the ministry' in the same way as *The Jacobite's Journal* was one.

⁵ For political background to the two journals I am indebted to Coley's General Introductions and Cleary, Ch. 6. In addition to overall backgrounds, Cleary offers politically-informed interpretations of individual issues.

What is likely, however, is that the paper was sponsored by Fielding's friends in the 'Broad-Bottom' administration who, though allied with Pelham and the Old Corps in a common effort to exclude Granville from power, constituted a distinct faction within the ministry. In an arrangement probably similar to the sponsorship of *The Champion*, Fielding's friends appear to have established the paper through the agency of certain members of the trade who formed a partnership of shareholders. (*Life*, p. 401)

As a matter of fact, the first number of *The True Patriot* appeared on 5 November 1745, when the threats of the Forty-Five were most serious, as it was only three days later, on 8 November, that the Jacobite army crossed the Border. Until No. 13 (28 January 1746), the journal oscillated between the 'calming voice of a journalist attached to the ministry' and 'crude, "scare" propaganda' (Cleary, p. 213). Granted that Fielding, as a staunch Hanoverian, must have been genuinely concerned about the progress of the Jacobites in this critical period, it was also required of him to represent the threats of the Jacobites in full seriousness to the nation, in the political interests of his patrons in the ministry (Coley, General Introduction, p. lxxxix). The drift of propaganda in *The True Patriot* was anti-Granville, and since Granville took the Forty-Five casually and prevailed on the King to do the same, thus disabling the Pelham ministry from efficiently responding to the real threats, it suited the ministerial position to press home the seriousness of the Jacobite challenge. The degree of Fielding's propagandist bonds to his patrons can be best measured by the sequence and contents of Nos. 14–16 (4–18 February 1746). The Pelhams and the Patriots, Fielding's patrons, began to resign '*en masse*' from 10 February, after a period of tension with the King and his favourite Granville, which was, in Cleary's words, 'a planned, well-executed withdrawal *en masse* by those who controlled both Houses of Parliament, the only way of baulking the King's design to dismiss and replace them piecemeal and at his pleasure' (pp. 221–22). Fielding, probably with some inside information of the plan, reveals his alliance with the ministry in No. 14 (4 February), shifting the tone of political impartiality as 'True Patriot'. The ministerial crisis came to an end on 14 February, as Granville and Bath (formerly Pulteney) had proved unpopular and unable to form their own ministry. No. 16 (18 February)

gleefully rejoices over the fall of Granville and Bath, who as Carteret and Pulteney had been most responsible for Fielding's disillusion with 'great' politicians in 1742. In the meantime, though, 'Fielding could not be sure', says Cleary, 'whether he would be an opposition writer (he surely would have become one if the King and Granville had prevailed) or a ministerial one by the following Tuesday'. Hence No. 15 (11 February) with the 'time-marking essay on hoop-petticoats' (p. 221). From No. 16 onwards, *The True Patriot* would openly support the ministry.

It is plausible that *The Jacobite's Journal*, 'the only paper to give ungrudging support to the ministry' in 1747–48, was from the outset planned as a ministerial organ, with an eye to the imminent peace negotiations in particular.

The first issue of *The Jacobite's Journal* [...] appeared within days of the royal announcement about the negotiations. The journal would continue weekly for forty-nine issues, ceasing publication just over two weeks after the final treaty terms were officially revealed. (Cleary, p. 243)

Cleary points out that in the paper war upon the sensitive issues of war and peace, the opposition was advantaged in that 'it could be specific and effective in criticizing the negotiations (winter and early spring, 1747–48), then the Peace Preliminaries (later spring through early fall 1748), while ministerialists had to be vague or attempt to shift attention away from the treaty expectations'. This peculiar situation became 'a crucial determinant of the rhetorical approach and evolution of *The Jacobite's Journal*', which suggests that the Jacobite persona adopted by Fielding was probably one of the rhetorical devices to 'shift attention away' from the real issues (p. 243).

Significantly enough, *The Jacobite's Journal* goes through a mid-term reshaping similar to that of *The True Patriot* as explained above. In No. 17 (26 March 1748), 'John Trott-Plaid', the hitherto Jacobite Author of the journal, drops his Jacobite mask to defend the ministry without irony. Cleary explains several circumstances pertinent to this shift, which include among others the fact that by then the prospect of the treaty had grown fair enough (p. 251). Fielding was allowed to dispense with the 'convenience of "Jacobite smear" during the touchy peace negotiations' (p. 244). In

addition, the heightened pitch of vicious personal attacks on Fielding and his patrons, especially Lyttelton, concurrent with the dangerous appearance of James Ralph in *The Remembrancer*, made it necessary for Fielding to defend himself and his patron(s) with the then cumbersome Jacobite mask off (Cleary, p. 250).

It appears from the above that compared with the 'not at all political' *Covent-Garden Journal* (Hanson, p. 119) or even *The Champion*, 'not originally planned as a political vehicle' (Battestin, *Life*, p. 257), *The True Patriot* and *The Jacobite's Journal* provided outright political material in support of the ministry. They therefore allowed the author much less freedom of his own, the main concerns being dictated by the political exigencies that precipitated his apology for the ministry. As we have remarked, even the minimal unity of the Author's proclaimed self within a single journal is broken by the exigencies. To keep up that unity may not matter to the politicians, but it certainly matters to the author. This can be inferred, for example, from the fact that in the two issues in question, that is, No. 14 of *The True Patriot* and No. 17 of *The Jacobite's Journal*, apology for the author gets the better of apology for the ministry. The critical No. 17 is followed by an outright 'Vindication' of Lyttelton in No. 18 (p. 217), and the awkward conversion is mediated by a made-up correspondent. One may argue that the letter form is possibly adopted to bestow a certain impression of impartiality on the contents. Even so, very few, if any, would have been taken in by the guise into believing the 'Vindication' came from anybody but Lyttelton's protégé, Henry Fielding. Most of all, the multitude of Fielding's enemies would not let it happen. In my view, the substitution of a correspondent at this juncture is a perfunctory means by which Fielding 'screens' himself, whether consciously or not, from the uncomfortable task of vindicating his 'Paymaster', as his enemies were pleased to call Lyttelton. We have already remarked in *The Champion* a similar tendency to delegate outspoken political commentary to correspondents or other members of the Vinegar family. Then, to defend one's 'Paymaster' to the hostile public ought to be a great deal more discomfiting than to treat the eager public with opposition diets. Hence, the degree of Fielding's self-consciousness in *The*

Jacobite's Journal, the most outspokenly pro-ministerial and thus the most outrageously vilified of all Fielding's four journals, can be measured by the proportion of his seeming dependence on correspondence, which is conspicuously greater in *The Jacobite's Journal* than in the other journals.

The issues or parts of issues most relevant to the authorial dimension in *The True Patriot* and *The Jacobite's Journal*, especially in connection with Fielding's tensioned apology for the ministry, can be divided into four groups: (1) the opening essays; (2) the watershed essays (No. 14 of *The True Patriot* and No. 17 of *The Jacobite's Journal*); (3) the occasional vindications against opposition attackers, particularly James Ralph; and (4) the final essays. First of all, both opening essays of *The True Patriot* and *The Jacobite's Journal* begin by complaining of the multitude of newspapers and their authors and claim superiority in justification of launching a new journal into the already crowded market. Mr. 'True Patriot' opens his paper with the address that 'Fashion is the great Governor of this World' that 'presides not only in Matters of Dress and Amusement, but in Law, Physic, Politics, Religion, and all other Things of the gravest Kind' (p. 103).

But of all Mankind, there are none whom it so absolutely imports to conform to the Golden Rule as an Author; by neglecting this, *Milton* himself lay long in Obscurity, and the World had nearly lost the best Poem which perhaps it hath ever seen. On the contrary, by adhering to it, *Tom Durfey*, whose Name is almost forgot, and many others who are quite forgotten, flourished most notably in their respective Ages, and eat and were read very plentifully by their Cotemporaries. (pp. 105-06)

'It is [...] the Business of every Man to accommodate himself to the 'Fashion of the Times' (p. 105), and what is wrong with an author who prefers to 'eat [...] very plentifully' by being a Durfey rather than to starve as a Milton? 'I have determined to conform myself to the reigning Taste,' says the present Author, too, 'being informed by my Bookseller, a Man of great Sagacity in his Business, *That no Body at present reads any thing but News-Papers*' (p. 106). To ascribe the decision to the bookseller's business acumen is as usual a most convenient tactic by which the Author poses as

detached from 'Business' aspects of a literary venture like *The True Patriot*. Even so, the Author may incur as unpleasant a reputation as the Durfeyan stigma itself, that is, a reputation as one of the 'Journeymen of Booksellers' crowding the market (p. 107). He seeks to distinguish himself from them by displaying his capacity and discern 'little Imperfections in them all' and remarks with apparent confidence that 'the Public will expel some of them to make Room for their Betters' like himself (pp. 106–07).

The True Patriot claims his superiority to ordinary hacks on the grounds that he is (1) of no 'Grubstreet' breed, (2) 'of no Party', (3) 'a Gentleman', and (4) endowed with 'Learning, Knowledge, and other Qualifications' required to conduct a decent paper (pp. 107–08). It is particularly interesting to note the Author dilate on the third claim as follows:

I am a Gentleman: A Circumstance by which my Reader [...] may expect, by means of my Intercourse with People of Condition, to find here many Articles of Importance concerning the Affairs and Transactions of the Great World, (which can never reach the Ears of vulgar News-Writers) not only in Matters of State and Politics, but Amusement. (p. 108)

What we witness is, first of all, a significant transformation from the Author of *Joseph Andrews* to the present Author of *The True Patriot*, who shows off his 'Intercourse with People of Condition' and the 'Great World' as argument for his superiority to 'vulgar News-Writers'. In the novel, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, the Author not only denounces 'High People' but envisions a literary authority independent of them. Thus we have noticed, for example, the apparently laudatory allusion to Pope tinged with some surreptitious sarcasm at 'the great Poet' who 'lives among all the great People' and whom Joseph used to see at Lady Booby's table (III. 6). Compared with this, the present Author's bearing as appears from the above passage signals the imminent arrival of a new ministerial author who duly assumes a qualitatively different attitude to political authorities and seeks to convert 'great' connections into a badge of literary distinction.

The Author goes as far as to specify these connections, with reference to his identity, which is 'a Matter commonly of the greatest Importance towards the Recommendation of all Works of Literature' (p. 108).

First, then, It is very probable I am Lord *B—ke*. This I collect from my Stile in Writing and Knowledge in Politics. Again it is as probable that I am the *B—p* of ****, from my Zeal for the Protestant Religion. When I consider these, together with the Wit and Humour which will diffuse themselves through the whole, it is more than possible I may be Lord *C—* himself, or at least he may have some Share in my Paper.

From some, or all of these Reasons, I am very likely Mr. *W—n*, Mr. *D—n*, Mr. *L—n*, Mr. *F—g*, Mr. *T—n*, or indeed any other Person who hath ever distinguished himself in the Republic of Letters. (pp. 108–10)

The disemvowelled 'names' refer to Bolingbroke, Benjamin Hoadly (Bishop of Winchester), Chesterfield, William Warburton, Dodington, Lyttelton, Fielding, and James Thomson respectively (pp. 108–10n, and General Introduction, pp. lxxi–xcix), the sequence of which Coley finds 'curious' in that 'one might expect that the name of the "real" author should conclude the list, as a kind of complimentary anticlimax to the other, greater names' (p. xcix).⁶ Indeed the list, in the 'expected' order, would appear the more akin to Nicholas Amhurst's in *The Craftsman* (25 November 1727), which as quoted earlier put 'a Grubstreet Garreter' after the 'greater names' in politics and letters. Whatever the ordering, the True Patriot, like the 'Craftsman', alludes to those 'names' to align his literary identity with them and appropriate for his present job the literary authority of whoever 'hath ever distinguished himself in the Republic of Letters'. The affiliation established by those 'names', though, is not so much literary as political, as they are all patrons and writers of Patriot principles masterminded by Bolingbroke, with the probable exception of Bishop Hoadly. Bolingbroke, Chesterfield, and Lyttelton were renowned political writers, associated with *The Craftsman* and *Common Sense* in particular, the two most prestigious opposition journals to the Walpole ministry, but the inclusion of Dodington as

⁶ With reference to the typographical error in the original printed text ('Mr. | Mr. F—g, T—n'), Coley explains that it probably resulted from the printer's error of hand or eye, not from Fielding's insertion of his own name by afterthought (p. 111n).

distinguished man of letters is barely justified, considering that he was less of a writer than of a patron. What follows is a political identification obvious enough to seem to cancel the foregone claim to political impartiality, but that the claim is in itself a recapitulation of the principal polemic of the Patriots.

The 'Gentleman' Author's privileged conversation with 'People of Condition' and connection with the distinguished 'names' serve to justify the 'Price [...] one Third more than my cotemporary Weekly Historians set on their Labours' (p. 111).

And here I might, with Modesty enough, insist, that if I am either what or who I pretend to be, I have sufficient Title to this Distinction. It is well known that, among Mechanics, a much larger Advance is often allowed only for a particular Name. A genteel Person would not be suspected of dealing with any other than the most eminent in his Trade, tho' he is convinced he pays an additional Price by so doing. (p. 112)

Given the exchangeability of 'Name' and 'Price', the preceding catalogue of the 'eminent' names, including Fielding's own, in (political) letters may easily glide into the Author's bill for 'an additional Price'. The idea of an author's bill is not unfamiliar, as we are by now accustomed to its affinity to a 'Taylor's Bill' (*Joseph Andrews*, II. 1). The Author's earlier pronouncement, in distinguishing himself from the 'Journeymen of Booksellers', that he will 'provide the Public a better Entertainment than it hath lately been dieted with' is virtually identical with the managerial warranty at the end of the 'Dedication to the Public' of *The Historical Register*: 'I assure you no labour shall be spared, on my side, to entertain you in a cheaper and better manner than seems to be the intention of any other' (203). Likewise, the present Author succinctly concludes the opening leader 'in the Words of the fair and honest Tradesman: Gentlemen, upon my Word and Honour, I can afford it no cheaper; and I believe there is no Shop in Town will use you better for the Price' (p. 112). As Goldgar rightly argues, claims to superiority are 'conventional puffery, a common tactic in the paper wars', especially in launching new papers ('Fielding, Periodicals, and the Idea of Literary Fame', p. 5). We have remarked the Author of *The True Patriot*, in accordance with the convention, puff up himself as

'Gentleman' to be distinguished from 'Grubstreet' authors. By the time he reaches the last 'Article, viz. the Price', though, the Author presents himself as 'Tradesman' rather than 'Gentleman', which in effect levels him with his rivals, genteel or not, in the same trade. Besides, the demarcation of a 'Gentleman' becomes ambiguous, when the Author addresses his customers as 'Gentlemen' in a manner no different to the lip-service paid by the most venal of tradesmen or their equivalents (e. g. the governor of Newgate or Bondum the bailiff in *Amelia*). As noted earlier, *The True Patriot* was the least exposed, of all Fielding's journals, to scurrilous criticism, because of the low profile of the opposition press during the Forty-Five. This made it relatively safe or even propitious for Fielding to dwell on his ministerial connections as he actually did in the greater part of the opening essay. Though more or less safeguarded from external criticism, the 'semi-official voice' of the emerging ministerialist 'with inside information and some authority' (Cleary, p. 224) is not entirely immune to internal mockery from the inaugurating number throughout the run of the journal. Given the parallel role of Fielding's *True Patriot* during the Forty-Five to that of Addison's *Freeholder* during the Jacobite Rising in 1715, the tonal difference is obvious between the half-serious and 'half-mocking' Patriot-Gentleman-Tradesman (Cleary, p. 211) and his fully-serious predecessor, the former denoting Fielding's problematic adjustment to ministerial writing.

The Jacobite's Journal was launched into the so-called 'Jacobite paper war' stimulated by the oppositional *Old England* in early 1747.⁷ The consolidation of the Patriots in the ministry was much firmer than in November 1745, but their apologist found himself in an extremely exposed position, as the opposition was also more virulent than during the Forty-Five and concentrating its fire on Fielding as the author of the 'only paper to give ungrudging support to the ministry' (General Introduction,

⁷ Cleary (pp. 231–64) gives a full account of the Jacobite paper war and Fielding's engagement in it with *The Jacobite's Journal* and a couple of pamphlets, *A Dialogue between a Gentleman from London, Agent for two Court Candidates, and an Honest Alderman of the Country Party* (pb. 23 June 1747), and *A Proper Answer to a Late Scurrilous Libel, entitled, 'An Apology for the Conduct of a late celebrated Second-rate Minister'* (pb. 24 December 1747). The pamphlets are collected with the journal in the Wesleyan *Jacobite's Journal and Related Writings*, ed. by W. B. Coley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974).

p. lv). The kind of self-importance that characterised the True Patriot was out of the question in the new ministerial journal, and a Jacobite persona was adopted to enable the Author of *The Jacobite's Journal* to participate in what Cleary terms the 'humourizing' of one's enemies into Jacobites in the paper war of 1747–48 (p. 241). Thus the inauguration of the Jacobite Author John Trott-Plaid is marked by sheer absurdity, his apology for setting up a new paper being that there is no need for apology.

If ever there was a Time when a Daily or Weekly Writer might venture to appear without any Apology to the Public, I think it is the present; for few Readers will, I believe, imagine it Presumption in any Author to enter the Lists against those Works of his Cotemporaries, which are now known by the Name of Newspapers; since his Talents must be very indifferent, indeed, if he is not capable of shining among a Set of such dark Planets. (No. 1, p. 90)

Trott-Plaid's Jacobitism, too, goes without apology: 'as it seems to require no Apology to appear as a Writer, so neither can I persuade myself it requires any, at this Season, to appear as a Jacobite' (p. 90). He further dwells on the curious analogy between a Jacobite and an author thus: 'it may be said of our Party as it is of Poets; JACOBITA NASCITUR, NON FIT', that is, 'a Jacobite is born, not made' (p. 91). The Author is equally Drawcansirian in proclaiming, without the least 'scruple', his superior authorship or natural-born Jacobitism. On a later occasion, Trott-Plaid declares his Jacobitism in a precisely Drawcansirian wording:

I am resolved to be a Jacobite, and will be so in spite of all the Reason and Evidence in the World. I was born a Jacobite, and I was bred one. My Father was a Jacobite before me, and so have been all our Family, and so am I, and so I will always be, because I will, and because I dare. (No. 12, p. 167)

Trott-Plaid is a Jacobite, simply because he 'dares', like the original Drawcansir of *The Rehearsal*, who says, 'I drink I huff, I strut, look big and stare;| And all this I can do, because I dare' (IV. 1). The daring Jacobite affirms that 'if a Man will only venture being laughed at, he may own himself a Jacobite without any other Danger'

(p. 95). Thus a 'Jacobite' is synonymous with a fool, a laughing stock, within the rhetoric of *The Jacobite's Journal*, which facilitates a further identification with another 'laughing Stock', that is, an author (*The Covent-Garden Journal*, No. 4). In this regard, it is no coincidence that Trott-Plaid's manner of address is reminiscent of the equally Drawcansirian manner of the Champion and anticipating the same of the aptly named Author, Alexander Drawcansir, of *The Covent-Garden Journal*. Given Fielding's known anti-Jacobitism, the Jacobite Trott-Plaid is distinctly a mask, a persona, unlike the Authors of the other three journals, of whom it is almost irrelevant to say whether they are personae or not. Curiously enough, the Jacobite persona still bears out Fielding's authorial identity at its most characteristic.

The critical transformation of the True Patriot, apparently 'of no Party', into a partisan apologist takes place over the numbers for 4–17 February (Nos. 14–16), when Fielding's patrons were orchestrating a ministerial crisis. The leader for No. 14 is particularly noteworthy for its strategic first move towards an apologia for the conversion. With his eyes upon the embarrassing job and subsequent criticisms, the Author begins by deploring the indiscriminately slanderous tendency of the world, to which authors like himself are particularly susceptible. Thus the stigma of 'Scriblers' is unduly affixed on 'some of the best and worthiest Members' of the profession, especially those 'who apply their Talents to expose the Vices and Follies which reign in their Age and Country' (pp. 208–09). Mr. True Patriot begins to unfold his real concern thus:

But of all Writers, there is none so much exposed to this ungenerous Treatment, as those who meddle in Politics. Ministers of State, who are generally the worst and wickedest of Men, no sooner hear a Political Writer hath made his Appearance in the World, than they are alarm'd, even as a Thief would be, by one coming to awaken the Family while he was robbing the House. The Word is immediately given to all the Gang. Every Method is practised to vilify and decry the Writer and his Works, and *Scribler* resounds through all the Coffee-houses in Town. (p. 209)

The Author implies that he is *the* 'good Writer' unjustly vilified by 'great wicked Men' and their 'Gang', and goes on to aver, under the apprehension of attacks at his

imminent breach of political impartiality, that he 'hath not sought the Protection of any Party, by adhering rigidly to the Principles of any, farther than is consistent with the true Interest of his Country' (p. 210). The wording is equivocal, although the Author seems still to be denouncing factionalism. It is just a matter of time, though, before he goes on to champion the Patriot faction of ministers as concerned for the 'true Interest' of the country, while other 'Ministers of State', such as Granville, are not. No. 14 suggests and No. 16 confirms the True Patriot's loyalty to the former, who have been operating a concerted campaign against Granville and his protector George II. Hence the asperity of the remark that 'they must know little of Courts and Courtiers, who can imagine themselves making way to court Favours, by spending their Breath, or even their Blood, in Defence of their Sovereign' (p. 211). In cautious preparation for his new look, the Author recasts the initial pronouncement that he is 'of no Party', into the following:

I again declare, and I presume my Writings will bear the same Testimony, that I am engaged in no Party, nor in the support of any, *unless* of such as are truly and sincerely attached to the true Interest of their Country, and who are resolved to hazard all Things in its Preservation.

This is, I hope, the largest and strongest of all Parties; for the Support of which the *True Patriot* was undertaken. (p. 211: italics added)

When the Author concludes that 'this Nation is [...] in a deplorable Situation, a Situation from whence to deliver us requires very great Abilities, as well as the highest Integrity', it is beyond doubt whom the True Patriot means by the men of 'great Abilities' and 'the highest Integrity' wanted at the head of the nation.

Trott-Plaid drops his Jacobite mask in No. 17 of *The Jacobite's Journal*, saying, 'I am weary of personating a Character for which I have so solemn a Contempt' (p. 210). Though the truer reason is due to appear in the next issue, which is all about the 'Vindication of a Gentleman', that is, George Lyttelton (p. 217), four reasons are given in the present leader for the Author's abandonment of 'Irony': (1) 'Irony' is 'so liable to be mistaken' that it is 'the most dangerous to the Writer' and (2) hardly 'adapted to the Palat of the present Age' palled by 'nothing but downright Abuse'; (3)

Jacobitism is below ridicule or rather (4) 'past a Joke' (pp. 211–12). The present 'Taste in Reading', rendered in culinary idioms in comparison to that in 'Eating', is so degenerate that 'modern Authors' are obliged to provide acrid abuses to 'whet up and stimulate the pall'd Appetite of the Public'.

When a new Book, Pamphlet, or Poem is published, the Enquiry is not, as formerly, What is the Subject? Who writ it? Is there Wit or Humour in it? But, who is abused? Whom is the Author at now? Doth he lay about him well? and such-like; and according to the Answer received to these Questions, the Performance is cherish'd or rejected. (p. 212)

Abuses are bound to be factious by nature, as the True Patriot, too, testifies with his own observation of 'the Town' damning 'Dramatic Authors' in the following manner.

An instance of this occurs to my memory, at one of these Exhibitions, when I happened to sit next a Youth who was a most perfect Master of the Cat-call, and played upon it almost without Intermission. As the Performance did not, in my Opinion, deserve quite so severe a Treatment, I took an Occasion of remonstrating to my Neighbour, who without Hesitation swore he was resolved to damn the Play; for that the Author was in Possession of a very pretty Girl, for whom he had himself a violent Affection. Ay, damn him, says another who over-heard us, and who had hitherto accompanied the instrumental with very loud vocal Music, *I hate the Fellow, because he's a Whig.* (No. 18, p. 233)

Though addressing genuine complaints about hostile and factious audiences, both passages, in their given contexts, help prepare the Authors for changing their faces and becoming unambiguous apologists for the ministry against opposition writers. No. 19 of *The True Patriot* makes the first uninhibited assault on the opposition (in a letter form!), and Trott-Plaid enlarges on the fourth reason for laying down the Jacobite mask as follows:

However absurd and despicable the Principles of Jacobites may be, the Designs of the Party, and their Consequences, are of a serious Nature. When every Attempt, with which Malice can supply Invention, is employ'd to undermine and blow up the Constitution; when conceal'd Popish Traytors are crept into the Seminaries of Learning, and endeavour to taint the Minds of Youth; and when the most bare-faced Libels are every Week spread all over the Nation, in order to spirit up the Vulgar to rise and cut the Throats of their

Betters; it is high time to speak in a plainer Language than that of Irony, and to endeavour to raise something more than Mirth in the Mind of the Reader.
(p. 212)

The unmasked Author is actually warming up to fall upon opposition 'Incendiaries' in the very next paragraph, and it is, as he says, mainly to treat them with full seriousness that he sheds the 'motley Character'.

Trott-Plaid's target is not so much opposition 'Incendiaries' in general as one particular 'Drummer of Sedition'. This 'Drummer' is none other than James Ralph, Fielding's former colleague on *The Champion* and at the Haymarket, too, who was now editing *The Remembrancer* (December 1747–June 1751) on behalf of the new opposition backed by the Prince of Wales, Bolingbroke, and Dodington (*The Jacobite's Journal*, p. 213n, and Cleary, pp. 251–52). Ralph is singled out because he is 'a Man of Sense', thus 'far from being like the rest of his Fellow-Labourers, void of all Abilities', that is, the writers of *Old England* or *London Evening Post*, who 'can do neither Good nor Harm to any Cause or Party' (p. 214). What is most interesting about Trott-Plaid's 'serious' treatment of Ralph is that the better part of it reads like an apology for, instead of an indictment against, Ralph's 'writing [...] on more Sides than one'. It is worth quoting in length.

Here perhaps the candid Reader will say, Why did not the Ministry secure such a Writer to themselves, or at least purchase his Silence, when he offered himself to them? Especially since they have experienced his Abilities in writing already on more Sides than one? Why is an Author obliged to be a more disinterested Patriot than any other? And why is he, whose Livelihood is in his Pen, a greater Monster in using it to serve himself, than he who uses his Tongue to the same Purpose?

To confess the Truth, the World is in general too severe on Writers. In a Country where there is no public Provision for Men of Genius, and in an Age when no Literary Productions are encouraged, or indeed read, but such as are season'd with Scandal against the Great; and when a Custom hath prevailed of publishing this, not only with Impunity but with great Emolument, the Temptation to Men in desperate Circumstances is too violent to be resisted; and if the Public will feed a hungry Man for a little Calumny, he must be a very honest Person indeed, who will rather starve than write it.

In a Time therefore of profound Tranquillity, and when the Consequence, at the worst, can probably be no greater than the Change of a Ministry, I do not think a Writer, whose only Livelihood is his Pen, to deserve a very flagitious Character, if, when one Set of Men, (provided he keeps within the Rules of Decency) if he endeavours to make the best of his own Cause, and

uses a little Art in blackening his Adversary. Why should a Liberty which is allowed to every other Advocate, be deny'd to this? (pp. 214–15)

The Author does attack Ralph in the following paragraph, but the above excerpt reveals a sincere sympathy with any 'Writer, whose only Livelihood is his Pen'. In 'an Age when no Literary Productions are encouraged', it surely takes 'a very honest Person' to prefer 'starving' to earning bread by writing 'a little Calumny' for the public. All this is an apology more for the Author himself than for Ralph, or rather the two are hardly separate. In truth, Fielding's 'transition from "out" to "in"' was equally castigated as writing 'on more Sides than one' (*The True Patriot*, General Introduction, p. civ). Then, why should 'an Author', whose 'Livelihood is in his Pen', be a 'more disinterested Patriot than any other', when, for example, every politician or sometime minister moves 'in' and 'out' occasionally? Speaking of Ralph, why is he guiltier of changing sides than his present backers? Bolingbroke had more 'ins' and 'outs' than any other politician. Dodington moved out of the Walpole ministry to immediately join the opposition in 1739, entered the administration with other leaders of the former opposition in 1744, and was now directing *The Remembrancer* in opposition to his former colleagues still in the Pelham ministry. Though Fielding attempts no overt comment on such matters in the present essay, it is not unnatural that Vinegar-turned-Trott-Plaid retains sympathy with old Ralph or rather the 'Author [...] whose Livelihood is in his Pen'. Depicted as the two 'worst-fed Asses' in *The Opposition: A Vision*, Ralph and 'Vinegar' once starved together for ungrateful patrons. No wonder that compared with the gingerly extended apology for the 'Drummer of Sedition', the ensuing one-paragraph vindication of 'the best of Governments', beginning with the awkward 'But', appears rather perfunctory (p. 215). After all, the greatest irony with relation to this particular essay is that the 'Drummer of Sedition' himself would quote it in pleading the interests of authors in his *Case of Authors* (p. 11).

Trott-Plaid's ambiguous condemnation of Ralph corresponds with the occasional signs of fundamental ambivalence towards political writing itself in the intervals of

the main polemics of *The Jacobite's Journal*. For instance, Trott-Plaid ironically touches on the truest aspect of partisan writing in the following observation:

Tho' my Paper, being appropriated to the Use of the Jacobite Party, may be rather considered as a private than as a public Vehicle; and no one consequently hath a right to take a Place in it, as in the several Stage Papers which daily or weekly set out from the Press; I shall, however, imitate the known Custom among Coachmen, who never scruple, when they have a proper Opportunity, to convert their Master's Coach into a Hack, and to take up a Fare. In like manner, when I have Leisure, and when the Business of my Masters doth not urgently call upon me, I shall usher into the World whatever Person or Goods I please. (No. 5, p. 116)

Trott-Plaid's mention of the 'Jacobite Party' is only perfunctory, and what he remarks of his relation to his 'Masters' brings into focus the nature of partisan writing itself, no matter which party is in question. In keeping with this, one Ephemeridius writes to Trott-Plaid in No. 14: 'I, who am a Practitioner of the Law, know as well as you Political Writers, that any Thing may be made out of any Thing, and indeed out of nothing, notwithstanding an obsolete mistaken Maxim to the contrary' (p. 187). The 'Business' of 'Political Writers', as implicitly defined by this fictitious correspondent, is to write up and down 'any Thing' in the political interests of their (pay-) 'Masters', in the same manner as a hackney coachman or a 'Practitioner of the Law' like the correspondent himself serves anybody for a fee. In this levelling perspective, Fielding the real author of the present journal is running the same 'Business' as lesser political hirelings like Ralph, which explains the self-mocking irony in these passages. This kind of irony is not irrelevant to the apology for Ralph or 'Political Writers' in general, who are as dependent as any on the pen for their 'Livelihood'. What Fielding fundamentally resents is the inherently subservient relation of 'Political Writers' to their 'Masters', which inevitably interferes with his vindication of his 'Masters'.

Fielding's troubled view of the relation of payee to payer in partisan writing appears most evident in the final essays. The final number of *The True Patriot* concludes as follows:

Whatever therefore may be my Fate, as I have discharged my Duty to my King and Country, and have, at the same Time, preserved even a Decency to those who have (erroneously, I hope) embraced a Cause in Opposition to both, I shall now retire with the secret Satisfaction which attends right Actions, tho' they fail of any great Reward from the one, and are prosecuted with Curses and Vengeance from the other. (p. 309)

The sentiments of this essay are more personal than simply polemical, reminiscent of the slur upon 'Kings' and 'Ministers' quoted earlier in this section (No. 14, p. 211). Coley discerns in the final leader a 'heightened, self-pitying tone of unrequitedness', which in his view 'almost certainly results from Fielding's failure to gain either a place or a pension for his labours on the paper' (General Introduction, p. lxviii). The final leader of *The Jacobite's Journal* (5 November 1748), unlike that of *The True Patriot*, makes no particular complaint about the want of rewards, nor indeed mentions such matters at all. In truth, Fielding was not closing the journal empty-handed, for his magisterial career had just begun officially when he sat to write the final essay for *The Jacobite's Journal*, as detailed in the preceding section. Fielding's enemies in the opposition press were already maligning his impending advancement 'from *Grubstreet* into the Verge of Court', in addition to the alleged weekly fee of two and a half guineas during his editorship of the journal. They maliciously stressed the 'low' nature of the advancement, which was certainly not unperceived, though not openly commented upon, by the beneficiary himself. It can be plausibly argued that Fielding looked upon his preferment to the magistracy as a disappointment, as Swift had earlier found the deanery in Ireland a slighting return at best for his services to the Harley ministry with *The Examiner* and *The Conduct of the Allies*. The Author of *The Jacobite's Journal* refrained from commenting on the issue altogether, because, first of all, it was out of the question for him, like the True Patriot, to deplore the want of rewards. More importantly, to complain of the lowness of his preferment would have been not only unbecoming but publicly admissive of his subservient relations to his 'Masters'. Rewarded or not, Fielding's ministerial services were critically disturbed by his more fundamental resentment at the interest-directed submission of authors to their paymasters.

As a ministerial writer, 'pension'd' or no, Fielding was estranged from the aura of disinterested and self-righteous opposition, which had been aptly cultivated by *The Craftsman* and accompanied to some extent his anti-Walpole plays and the *Champion* essays. On the other hand, the prestigious status of such earlier ministerialists as Swift in *The Examiner* or Addison in *The Freeholder* was unattainable in the later 1740s, especially due to the categorical stigmatisation of ministerial writing in the Walpole era. If the standard of one's opponent says something, it is significant that, for instance, Swift's was Arthur Mainwaring, who, though an inferior writer to Swift, was himself a gentleman-writer 'dabbling' in political journalism, a confidant of none less than the Duchess of Marlborough, and an MP with a place in the Treasury (Ellis, *Swift vs. Mainwaring*, Introduction, pp. xlix–liv). In contrast, Fielding's enemies were not merely of much less distinguished cast but had no scruples about degrading political arguments to personal invectives. The quantity and scurrility of their calumnies at Fielding, throughout the run of *The Jacobite's Journal* and beyond, testify to the degenerate state of the political press itself in Fielding's days, in which he was posted as the unaided apologist for the Pelham ministry. As for the remuneration for his services to the ministry, the fact that Fielding was running a puppet theatre of his own in March to May 1748, in addition to working on *The Jacobite's Journal* and the final books of *Tom Jones* (Battestin, *Life*, pp. 432, 434–39),⁸ is a significant indication that his paymasters were not bounteous enough to this 'known pension'd Scribler for the M—try', as his enemies were pleased to call him. His appointment to the magistracy, the first and last 'solid reward' Fielding received for his services to his patrons, would earn him the 'dirtiest money upon earth' amounting to little more than the annual pension William Arnall had received from Walpole, and with that, incurred the lasting slur that he was made a JP in return for defending his paymasters.

⁸ For a detailed account of Fielding's puppet theatre in Pantion Street, see Martin C. Battestin, 'Fielding and "Master Punch" in Pantion Street', *PQ*, 45 (1966), 191–208.

Whatever his rewards, there is no questioning that by the nature of his task in both *The True Patriot* and *The Jacobite's Journal* Fielding was bound to vindicate his patrons in the ministry. Given his known relationship with the Patriot patrons, to defend them was essentially to justify himself, as is particularly evident from Fielding's vindication of Lyttelton, *the* patron of his. However, Fielding's defence of the ministry remained far from enthusiastic for two main reasons: first, because his authorial identity interfered with his duty to support the great, whom he would largely regard as enemies rather than friends to authors, and secondly, because his duty was inherently detrimental to his ideal of independent authorship. For example, we have remarked how his condemnation of Ralph gives way to a justification of the self-preservation of authors, in an 'Age, when no Literary Productions are encouraged' (*The Jacobite's Journal*, No. 17). This kind of justification cannot but contradict his vindication of the 'best of Governments', for it does not make sense that 'there is no public Provision for Men of Genius' under the 'best of Governments'. The same concern that used to enliven the anti-Walpole satire now undermines Fielding's defence of the 'best of Governments'. More importantly, Fielding appears highly conscious of his subordinate status in serving the political interests of his 'Masters' in the ministerial journals, a situation manifestly inconsistent with his ideal notion of independent authorship. Given his known connection with the government, especially with Lyttelton his 'Paymaster', it would not do for him to disclaim his actual obligations to his patrons. Instead, Fielding seeks to disengage his political loyalty from his literary identity and performances, condemning the general tendency to 'espouse and decry the Productions of Men of Learning, as the Author is or is not of their Party':

This Method begins to prevail so much, that it will shortly be no more possible for a Man to gain Reputation in the Republic of Letters, without the Assistance of great Men, than it hath formerly been to procure a Place or Pension. Indeed, I think it will soon become no improper Application, to some of these, Sir, *I desire you will let me be a great Poet, or be pleased to let me have a great deal of Wit and Humour, in my Writings.*

(*The True Patriot*, No. 18, pp. 233–34)

Granted that this passage is primed with the 'Patriot' polemics in its original context, its import is germane to Fielding's resentment against both 'great Men' and their compliant authors, the one presuming to 'authorise' the other in accordance with their ideological serviceability. Literary 'authority', as Fielding seems to conceive at this juncture, ought not to be dependent on the political interests, nor to be granted or taken away by 'great Men'. This very argument is integral to the organisation of *Tom Jones*, where the foundling hero's progress to an autonomous and authoritative status parallels its author's pursuit of an independent literary achievement and self-generated authority.

3. Apology for Allworthy?

The Allworthy-Lyttelton identification is a well-established tradition in both contemporary and modern readings of *Tom Jones*, most of all confirmed in Fielding's dedication of the novel to the same patron. Besides Lyttelton, Ralph Allen, it is suggested in the dedication, partly inspired the character of Allworthy, and 'Paradise Hall' in the novel is believed to have been modelled on Allen's Prior Park at Bath. Yet, Allen's presence is less consistently felt than Lyttelton's in the novel, and the government minister, rather than the self-made postmaster of Bath risen from a 'humble' origin, seems a more natural model for Squire Allworthy, considering his status and accompanying responsibilities in the novel. Both were important patrons to Fielding, but his relationship with Lyttelton, his so-called 'Paymaster', was distinct from that with Allen, in that it had been constantly in the public eye, especially since Fielding's editorship of *The Jacobite's Journal*. To say this is not to insist that our reading of the character of Allworthy should be circumscribed by the search for references to Lyttelton or Allen or any other individual patron of Fielding's. Allworthy is the centre of the novel, in terms of Fielding's concern for the nature of civil authority and for the complex interrelation between that and aesthetic authority.

In *Tom Jones*, as in the journals, Fielding seems to defend the authority of the establishment embodied in Allworthy, less because he is paid to do so than because it is now required for his own self-vindication. When it was known once and for all that he was the ministry's protégé, it was crucial for Fielding, first of all, to be able to establish that he was recognised by a justified authority. On the other hand, the fact that he was bound, for whatever reasons, to defend the authority of others, especially his patrons, was inherently detrimental to Fielding's idea of literary authority, which derived from his ingrained resentment at authors' attendance on the great and desire for both financial and moral independence. The consequent tension between the two conflicting apologies for Allworthy/Lyttelton and for Tom/Fielding in Fielding's characterisation of Squire Allworthy in *Tom Jones*, essentially of the same kind as that which is central to Fielding's ministerial journals, is the subject of the present analysis.

One of the significant departures of *Tom Jones* from *Joseph Andrews* or even *Jonathan Wild* is that it begins with the introduction of Squire Allworthy, instead of the hero himself.

In that Part of the western Division of this Kingdom, which is commonly called *Somersetshire*, there lately lived (and perhaps lives still) a Gentleman whose Name was *Allworthy*, and who might well be called the Favourite of both Nature and Fortune; for both of these seem to have contended which should bless and enrich him most. In this Contention, Nature may seem to some to have come off victorious, as she bestowed on him many Gifts; while Fortune had only one Gift in her Power; but in pouring forth this, she was so very profuse, that others perhaps may think this single Endowment to have been more than equivalent to all the various Blessings which he enjoyed from Nature. From the former of these, he derived an agreeable Person, a sound Constitution, a solid Understanding, and a benevolent Heart; by the latter, he was decreed to the Inheritance of one of the largest Estates in the County.

(I. 2, p. 34)

Thus Allworthy is introduced to the reader as 'Favourite of both Nature and Fortune', who is apparently in want of nothing, blessed with 'an agreeable Person, a sound Constitution, a solid Understanding, and a benevolent Heart', and last but not least, possessed of 'one of the largest Estates in the County'. However, does he really want

nothing? This 'Favourite of Fortune', it is said in the very next paragraph, 'had, in his Youth, married a very worthy and beautiful Woman, of whom he had been extremely fond: By her he had three Children, all of whom died in their Infancy. He had likewise had the Misfortune of burying this beloved Wife herself' (p. 35). Despite the deceptively casual description of his 'Misfortune', as if it were but trifling compared with his 'Fortune', that statement seriously qualifies the foregoing introduction and our understanding of Allworthy in *Tom Jones*. The initial depiction of Allworthy as 'Favourite of Fortune', in fact, can be considered as an illustration of what Mikhail Bakhtin refers to as the 'common language' of the English comic novel.

This 'common language'—usually the average norm of spoken and written language for a given social group—is taken by the author precisely as the *common view*, as the verbal approach to people and things normal for a given sphere of society, as the *going point of view* and the *going value*. To one degree or another, the author distances himself from this common language, he steps back and objectifies it, forcing his own intentions to refract and diffuse themselves through the medium of this common view that has become embodied in language (a view that is always superficial and frequently hypocritical).⁹

In the present example from *Tom Jones*, it is clear that the Author 'distances himself from this common language' current among the members of a 'given social group', that is, Allworthy's parishioners. Another example of this 'distancing' is found at the beginning of the next chapter.

I have told my Reader, in the preceding Chapter, that Mr. *Allworthy* inherited a large Fortune; that he had a good Heart, and no Family. Hence, doubtless, it will be concluded by many, that he lived like an honest Man, owed no one a Shilling, took nothing but what was his own, kept a good House, entertained his Neighbours with a hearty Welcome at his Table, and was charitable to the Poor, *i.e.* to those who had rather beg than work, by giving them the Offals from it; that he dy'd immensely rich, and built an Hospital. (I. 3, pp. 37–38)

⁹ Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. by Michael Holquist, trans. by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 302–03.

At its best, the 'common view' is as 'superficial' as this, from which the Author of *Tom Jones* distances himself by explicitly saying that his 'History' deals with 'Matters of a much more extraordinary Kind' than is commonly expected.

Above all, such 'distancing' enables us to see Allworthy's subjection to and distortion by the 'common view' of the people he rules. More often than not, the 'common view' in *Tom Jones* appears not simply 'superficial' and 'hypocritical' but arbitrary and malignant. Thus Allworthy's 'Neighbours', far from sympathising with him in his 'Misfortune', actively vilify him for the stoicism with which he endures the 'Loss' of his wife.

This Loss, however great, he bore like a Man of Sense and Constancy; tho' it must be confest, he would often talk a little whimsically on this Head: For he sometimes said, he looked on himself as still married, and considered his Wife as only gone a little before him, a Journey which he should most certainly, sooner or later, take after her; and that he had not the least Doubt of meeting her again, in a Place where he should never part with her more. Sentiments for which *his Sense was arraigned by one Part of his Neighbours, his Religion by a second, and his Sincerity by a third.* (I. 2, p. 35: italics added)

Squire Allworthy, by the nature of his social position, always stands in the public eye and accordingly exposed to the malicious judgements of his parishioners. On his decision to take care of the baby Tom, for example, 'Mrs. Wilkins' the servant woman warns Allworthy of the possibility of unpleasant repercussions: 'though your Worship knows your own Innocence, yet the World is censorious' (I. 3, p. 40). Wilkins's warning proves only too true, when Allworthy's lenity to Jenny Jones, Tom's alleged mother, gives rise to a 'Whisper [...] that he himself was the Father of the foundling Child' (I. 9, p. 58). In truth, his mercy on Jenny earns him not a few malignant 'Calumnies', including some against Allworthy's 'Favourite' Jenny:

One said, 'I'll assure you, Madam hath had good Luck.' A second cry'd, 'See what it is to be a Favourite.' A third, 'Ay, this comes of her Learning.' Every Person made some malicious Comment or other, on the Occasion; and reflected on the Partiality of the Justice. [...] The Outcry against his Lenity soon began to take another Turn, and was changed into an Invective against his Cruelty to the poor Girl. Very grave and good Women exclaimed against Men who begot Children and then disowned them. Nor were there wanting

some, who, after the Departure of *Jenny*, insinuated, that she was spirited away with a Design too black to be mentioned, and who gave frequent Hints, that a legal Inquiry ought to be made into the whole Matter, and that some People should be forced to produce the Girl. (I. 9, pp. 58–59)

The Author intervenes, not knowing ‘what Complexion our Reader may be of’, to pronounce that ‘Mr. *Allworthy* was, and will hereafter appear to be, absolutely innocent of any criminal Intention whatever’.

He had indeed committed no other than an Error in Politics, by tempering Justice with Mercy, and by refusing to gratify the good-natured Disposition of the Mob, with an Object for their Compassion to work on in the Person of poor *Jenny*, whom, in order to pity, they desired to have seen sacrificed to Ruin and Infamy by a shameful Correction in a *Bridewel*. (I. 9, p. 59)

The arbitrariness of the ‘Mob’¹⁰ is such that their judgements are ever shifting and divided within themselves on every occasion. It is no wonder that *Allworthy*’s austerity to *Partridge* does not gratify the ‘good-natured Disposition’ of the gossipers any more than his lenity to *Jenny*.

The Justice which Mr. *Allworthy* had executed on *Partridge*, at first met with universal Approbation; but no sooner had he felt its Consequences, than his Neighbours began to relent, and to compassionate his Case; and presently after, to blame that as Rigour and Severity, which they before called Justice. They now exclaimed against punishing in cold Blood, and sang forth the Praises of Mercy and Forgiveness. (II. 6, p. 103)

‘Justice’ is a central issue, so far as the characterisation of *Allworthy* is concerned. Curiously enough, it is the Justice of the Peace himself and his rulings that are constantly judged by others. *Allworthy*’s court sits at Paradise Hall, which is in that regard as much a ‘public house’ as it is *Allworthy*’s private residence. In his capacity as Justice of the Peace, *Allworthy* is no less a ‘master of a public house’ than other Justices in Fielding’s fiction. As we shall see in the following chapter, Justice

¹⁰ ‘Whenever this Word occurs in our Writings, it intends Persons without Virtue, or Sense, in all Stations, and many of the highest Ranks are often meant by it’ (Fielding’s note, p. 59).

'Jonathan Thrasher' in *Amelia* (I. 2), the most typical of so-called trading justices, is deservedly identified as a 'master of a public house', because of his mercenary character, which is the primary attribute of every publican in Fielding's fiction. Obviously, Justice Allworthy is not to be equated with Justice Thrasher by any means, and what is at issue in his association with a 'master of a public house' is his vulnerability to public criticism, not the kind of venality that characterises Thrasher. Allworthy's subjection to the criticism of the arbitrary public significantly parallels that of the Author, as suggested in his renowned pronouncement that an author is like 'one who keeps a public Ordinary' (I. 1). As remarked in the introduction, the 'court' is, for Fielding, a stage on which the theatre of justice is enacted, and in mastering this stage, the Justice is analogous to the Author. The idea of mastering a stage or a public house is crucial to Fielding's problematic notions of 'Authoring' and authority in two very different ways. To understand this, it is useful to recall Fielding's habitual depiction of both himself and Walpole as 'master of a public house'. In contexts of disapproval, the 'master of a public house', whether it is a play house, a court, or the House of Commons, is mercenary, inhumane, and therefore rightly void of any authority. In apologetic contexts, the 'master' is unduly deprived of authority, exposed to the unreasoned criticism of theatrical, legal, or political audiences. Significantly, the Author of *Tom Jones* seems to defend Allworthy in the second context, that is, by underlining the maliciously critical disposition of his parishioners, the spectators of Allworthy's judicial 'performances'.

It is more important, however, to note how that apologia is qualified in *Tom Jones*. Allworthy's judgements, though bound to be calumniated regardless of right or wrong, are in most cases 'misjudgements' beguiled by perjuries and slanders. In his three major judgements in *Tom Jones*, Allworthy accuses Jenny, Partridge, and Tom on the slanderous witnesses of Mrs. Wilkins, Mrs. Partridge, and Blifil respectively, which are seemingly supported by circumstantial evidences. The questionable manner of Allworthy's jurisdiction is most aptly exposed in a later scene, when the Justice gets chastised for all his past misjudgements by Mrs. Waters, née (Jenny) Jones

(XVIII. 7). After revealing to Allworthy the secret of Tom's parentage, Mrs. Waters accuses him of employing 'a Lawyer to prosecute him [Tom] for a Murder of which he was not guilty'. On Allworthy's saying, 'I have been abused by the Person, whoever it was, that told you so', Mrs. Waters relates her encounter with Mr. Dowling, who she says insinuated to her (taking her for Mrs. Fitzpatrick) that 'a very worthy Gentleman' would assist her in Tom's prosecution for the murder of Fitzpatrick.

'And did this Mr. *Dowling*,' says *Allworthy*, with great Astonishment in his Countenance, 'tell you that I would assist in the Prosecution?'—'No, Sir,' answered she, 'I will not charge him wrongfully. He said, I should be assisted, but he mentioned no Name.—Yet you must pardon me, Sir, if from Circumstances I thought it could be no other.' (p. 943)

The judge and the judged of twenty years ago meet in reversed roles in this critical scene, Allworthy facing Mrs. Waters's accusation 'from Circumstances' and on Dowling's suspect witness. Such was the very manner of Allworthy's justice to Jenny, Partridge, and Tom. Mrs. Waters succinctly brings home the wrongs Allworthy did to them, in telling him that she will not charge Dowling 'wrongfully'.

With regard to Allworthy's failings that jeopardise his juridical authority, John Preston remarks that Allworthy proves 'the dupe of every insinuating rascal he meets'. 'Allworthy', Preston adds, '*should* have seen through Blifil' and 'there is no credit in ignorance'.¹¹ Eric Rothstein, too, condemns Allworthy for being 'wrongly self-confident' and expatiates on his juridical defects under two heads, that is, Allworthy's 'ignorance of the community' and his violation, through ignorance, of certain provisions of the law.¹² A superb illustration of Allworthy's deficiency, pertinent to Rothstein's second point, is the following excerpt from the 'Trial of Partridge', where, on Mrs. Partridge's wild accusations against her husband,

¹¹ John Preston, *The Created Self* (London: Heinemann, 1970), pp. 124–28.

¹² Eric Rothstein, 'Virtues of Authority in *Tom Jones*', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 28 (1987), pp. 99–126 (pp. 102–05).

Mr. *Allworthy* interrupted, and begged her to be pacified, promising her that she should have Justice; then turning to *Partridge*, who stood aghast, one half of his Wits being hurried away by Surprise and the other half by Fear, he said, he was sorry to see there was so wicked a Man in the World. [...] He exhorted him [...] to begin by immediately confessing the Fact, and not to persist in denying what was so plainly proved against him, even by his own Wife.

Here, Reader, I beg your Patience a Moment, while I make a just Compliment to the great Wisdom and Sagacity of our Law, which refuses to admit the Evidence of a Wife for or against her Husband. (II. 6, p. 100)

Allworthy's condemnation of Partridge on his wife's evidence is not justified in the eyes of the law, as the Author cuts in to point out. The Author apparently refrains from directly commenting upon Allworthy's ignorance of the particular provision, but his display of legal knowledge stands out so much against Allworthy's implied ignorance that it sufficiently underlines Allworthy's less than allworthy justice.

Indeed Allworthy's deficiency as judge goes deeper than technical blunders. At its most fundamental, it is related to his less than perfect faculty of discernment. In fact, this failure in Allworthy comes to light at a very early stage of the novel, long before Tom's arrival at Paradise Hall. In Book I, Chapter 10, portraying the 'Hospitality of Allworthy', the wealthy squire is expressly eulogised as the only patron of 'Men of Merit' in the kingdom.

Above all others, Men of Genius and Learning shared the principal Place in his Favour; and in these he had much Discernment: For though he had missed the Advantage of a learned Education, yet being blest with vast natural Abilities, he had so well profited by a vigorous, though late Application to Letters, and by much Conversation with Men of Eminence in this Way, that he was himself a very competent Judge in most Kinds of Literature. (p. 60)

Readers of this panegyric, though, are soon invited to question the 'Discernment' of this 'competent Judge', for as the chapter goes on, Allworthy's beneficiaries turn out to be the Blifil brothers. When Dr. Blifil, the elder of them, is introduced as 'Master of almost every other Science but that' of getting his 'bread', Allworthy's magnanimity to the doctor on account of that 'negative Merit' of having 'no bread to eat' is not seriously disconcerting. Allworthy's 'Discernment', however, begins to be

questioned, as it comes to light that this 'competent Judge' is in fact incompetent to see through Dr. Blifil's 'great Appearance of Religion'. No wonder that he, as well as his sister Bridget, is taken in by the appearance of 'all Gentleness and good Humour' put on by Captain Blifil:

He had a Scar on his Forehead, which did not so much injure his Beauty, as it denoted his Valour (for he was a half-pay Officer.) He had good Teeth, and something affable, when he pleased, in his Smile; though naturally his Countenance, as well as his Air and Voice, had much of Roughness in it, yet he could at any Time deposite this, and appear all Gentleness and good Humour. He was not ungentle, not entirely void of Wit, and in his Youth had abounded in Spriteliness, which, though he had lately put on a more serious Character, he could, when he pleased, resume. (pp. 62–63)

In his capacity to affect a certain 'Countenance' or 'Character' at his pleasure, Captain Blifil is of a kind with Wild or Shamela. A striking difference is noticeable between the ways in which Squire Allworthy's and Squire Booby's inability to penetrate the 'appearance' of their attendants is treated. Whereas Booby's blindness is rendered thoroughly contemptible, Allworthy's is given 'explanations'. As regards Dr. Blifil's 'great Appearance of Religion', the Author will 'not presume to say [...] whether his Religion was real, or consisted only in Appearance', there being no 'Touchstone, which can distinguish the true from the false'. Likewise, the tricky phrasing used in delineating Captain Blifil, for example, the repetition of double negatives ('He was not ungentle, not entirely void of Wit'), suggests the extreme difficulty of right discernment. Allworthy's repeated failings in discerning true 'Men of Merit' are therefore indicative not so much of his personal deficiency as of the fundamental difficulty of distinguishing 'the true from the false'. Even so, this does not wholly vindicate Allworthy, for to do that very difficult job is integral to patronage. As the story goes on, Allworthy's patronage is seen to be further wasted on Thwackum and Square, not to mention Blifil junior, while his questionable faculty of 'Discernment' continues to endanger his judicial authority. The apology for Allworthy in *Tom Jones* is not quite what it seems.

The true vindication of Allworthy points in a different direction. For all his misjudgements in *Tom Jones*, it would be unfair to accuse Allworthy of absolutely denouncing those he condemns in his role as Justice. In spite of his misguided condemnation of Partridge, Allworthy remains the 'secret Benefactor' to his family (II. 4, p. 103), as is suspected by the neighbourhood with disapproval, and later by Partridge with homage (XVIII. 6, p. 936). On the evening of Tom's departure from Paradise Hall, too, Allworthy arranges a private talk with Tom alone, when all the household has retired, and gives him the 'secret' bank-notes of £500, even saying, 'I can scarce think myself justifiable in what I am now going to bestow on you' (VI. 11, p. 310). This remains hidden from the neighbourhood, who, as always, condemn 'this Justice and Severity as the highest Cruelty' and accuse Allworthy of banishing Tom 'Pennyless' or even 'naked from the House of his inhuman Father' (p. 311). In Allworthy, public justice and private benevolence are separated from each other, the latter kept secret, at his insistence. Preston finds Allworthy 'unexpectedly egocentric' (p. 127) in this scene, but what seems to me most noteworthy in it is that Allworthy's concern for the justice of his secret charity to Tom exhibits his inner self cut from his public duty.¹³

In the same scene, Allworthy reveals to Tom (and to the reader) that his duty as Justice calls upon him 'to justify [his] own Character in punishing' Tom, especially for his 'Attempt to steal away the young Lady' Sophia, lest 'the World, who have already censured the Regard' he has shown for Tom, should accuse him of conniving at it (p. 311). 'Character' is the key issue here. Though he is still mistaken in the 'Character' of Blifil, 'that good young Man', and most of all, in Tom's, Allworthy is deeply concerned for his own 'Character', as well as Sophia's, of which Tom's alleged violation turns out to have been the principal cause of Allworthy's ire. Ironically, Allworthy ought to justify his 'Character' by branding others', and in

¹³ In this regard, Allworthy's characterisation supports Elizabeth Kraft's remark that the eighteenth century witnessed 'a splitting of the self into public and private, a split unnecessary in a culture of social stability based on either birthright or material wealth': *Character and Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Comic Fiction* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1992), p. 7.

doing so, he is taken in by malicious 'slanders'. To add to the irony, each and every judgement he makes, whether right or wrong, subjects himself to endless criticisms. In view of the scandalous predisposition of the 'World', Allworthy's self-justification is to be lost on that 'World'. Therefore it is in essence a self-reflection, a self-judgement, to shield oneself from the harsh judgements of the 'World', in other words, an expression of determination 'not' to be judged by others. Andrew Wright's remark on this issue is quite apposite: 'Allworthy behaves with an unconventionality which makes him out not as an ideally conforming country squire but as one whose comportment is fearlessly individual, if not always clear sighted'.¹⁴ Wright finds Allworthy's 'individuality' mainly in his attitude to love and marriage (p. 161), but to me it seems that what makes Allworthy truly 'individual' is his resolution to maintain his 'own' understanding of the individual reality of each character, even if she or he is convicted in his court, and not to be overwhelmed by the judgements of the 'World'.

Allworthy's 'individuality' or determination not to submit himself to any judgement but his own is the same quality that Tom attains as his story unfolds after the expulsion from Allworthy's, as the following section will show. With Tom's progress in mind, Allworthy needs to be defended in those terms, not in others, so that he and the foundling can stand on the same footing as two individuals. In contrast to the Adams-Joseph relationship, which is free from monetary obligations, the Allworthy-Tom relationship involves one serious impediment to Tom's pursuit of autonomy and self-generated authority: Allworthy's 'material' patronage. Apart from Allworthy's nurture of Tom for twenty years, each of the bank-notes of £500 Tom receives from his patron in the above scene is surely a tangible manifestation of Tom's obligation to Allworthy. Compare the staggering sum with Partridge's annual pension of twelve pounds or Adams's original twenty three pounds or later £130. Indeed Fielding received £600 for the copy of *Tom Jones*, which marked record revenues to date for the author Fielding. Hopefully, a private or rather secret

¹⁴ Andrew Wright, *Henry Fielding: Mask and Feast* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1965), p. 160.

benevolence like that may feel relatively less oppressive on the recipient, especially when the 'secret Benefactor' happens to be one like Allworthy, not the mortifying 'Man of Quality' in Wilson's story or the former Prime Minister as Fielding remembered him as suppresser of *Jonathan Wild*. Given that Allworthy has to provide some means of subsistence for Tom to maintain his own benevolent 'Character', it is equally essential for Tom to be free of any obligation that will obstruct his pursuit of autonomy. Hence the following discovery by Tom in the very next scene:

He was now searching his Pockets for his Wax, but found none, nor indeed anything else, therein; for in Truth he had, in his frantic Disposition, tossed every thing from him, and, amongst the rest, his Pocket-book, which he had received from Mr. *Allworthy*, which he had never opened, and which now first occurred to his Memory. (VI. 12, p. 313)

The contents of the 'Pocket-book', to say nothing of their sum total, which has been appropriated by Black George, will remain unknown to Tom, so that he can leave Paradise Hall unobliged to his patron, while Allworthy's benevolent 'Character' has been established once and for all.

4. 'Little besides their Characters to recommend them'

Allworthy's malicious parishioners are unwittingly right in concluding, at Tom's departure from Paradise Hall, that 'he was sent away Pennyless, and [...] naked from the House of his inhuman Father' (VI. 11, p. 311). In effect at least, Allworthy's expulsion of Tom is reminiscent of Lady Booby's 'Dismission of [Joseph] stripped, and without a Character' (IV. 1, p. 279). Though he does not go literally and 'entirely naked' as Joseph does afterwards (I. 12, p. 52), Tom leaves, like Joseph, stripped of his 'Character', which is pronounced void by Allworthy.¹⁵ The 'Character' or letter of recommendation of the footman is directly related to his livelihood, for without one

¹⁵ For a discussion of Joseph's gradual divestiture and subsequent rise to genteel status, see Treadwell Ruml, II, 'Joseph Andrews as Exemplary Gentleman', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 22 (1992), 195–207 (p. 202).

he will not be admitted into any service. Likewise, Tom's 'Character' is his sole property, the only thing that is proper to the foundling, 'a pure character, cut off from all causes'.¹⁶ While Tom has virtually freed himself of his material obligation to the patron-father Allworthy by losing the bank-notes of £500 even before knowing of their existence, he is further required to overrule Allworthy's unjust verdict on the bankruptcy of his 'Character' and thus to prove himself an even higher authority than the judge.

Though his 'Character' has already been pronounced bankrupt by Allworthy, Tom remains 'all heroic Virtue, and angelic Goodness' to Sophia (VI. 13, p. 318), at least until the Upton episode. At Upton, Sophia proclaims to Honour that Tom 'is not only a Villain, but a low despicable Wretch' (X. 5, p. 545), after listening to a maid who, mistaking Partridge for Tom, misrepresents him to Sophia. It appears from both Allworthy's and Sophia's (mis)judgements that the judges are deeply concerned for their own characters. Just as Allworthy believed his 'own Character' on trial in punishing Tom, so Sophia will not tolerate Tom's alleged trifling with 'the Lily-white Character of Sophia herself' (p. 542). After the revelation of Tom's (in fact Partridge's) careless gossiping on her 'Name', Sophia

told her trusty Waiting-woman, 'That she never was more easy than at present. I am now convinced,' said she 'he is not only a Villain, but a low despicable Wretch. I can forgive all rather than his *exposing my Name* in so barbarous a Manner. That renders him the Object of my Contempt.'
(p. 545: italics added)

'Character' or 'Name' is of such consequence to both Allworthy and Sophia that their love for Tom is not enough to overcome their paramount concern. Given the vital importance of 'Character' to people of Allworthy and Sophia's order, the loss of it is even more fateful for the foundling Tom or the lower orders, who, as Mrs. Miller says, 'have little besides their Characters to recommend them' (XIV. 3, p. 750).

¹⁶ Leo Braudy, *Hume, Fielding and Gibbon: Narrative Form in History and Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 180. To Braudy, Tom's 'hereditary causation' as the 'son of the nasty Bridget Blifil and the nonentity Mr. Summer' virtually counts for nothing.

To the Millers, for example, Nancy's loss of reputation through having a child and being deserted by Nightingale potentially means the utter ruin or even death of the whole family (XIV. 6, pp. 764–65). Their 'Characters' being the little they have, the Millers cannot save Nancy's name by paying money for secrecy in the same way as Lady Bellaston saves hers by buying up Honour's silence (XV. 10, p. 825) or indeed as Bridget saved her name by paying Jenny Jones for the greatest secrecy in the novel, that is, Tom's real parentage. Jenny, now Mrs. Waters, confesses to Allworthy thus: 'I thought myself, by her [Bridget's] Generosity, *nobly rewarded, both for my Secrecy and my Shame*' (XVIII. 7, p. 941: italics added). Bridget bought her name and Jenny sold hers. In *Tom Jones*, name or character is property in double sense. When Tom says of Nancy to Nightingale that 'she is in herself a Fortune; [...] for she is one of the best of Women' (XIV. 8, pp. 773–74), Nancy's good character is 'a Fortune' or property in the positive sense of the word. This kind of 'Fortune', however, is less solid than the other,

for a Secret (as some of my Readers will perhaps acknowledge from Experience) is often a very valuable Possession; and that not only to those who faithfully keep it, but sometimes to such as whisper it about till it come to the Ears of every one, except the ignorant Person, who pays for the supposed concealing of what is publicly known. (XV. 7, p. 813)

Thus character is often purchased and converted into hard cash in *Tom Jones*, especially in Lady Bellaston's costly 'Farce of the World' (XV. 7, p. 810). When Tom finds himself literally bankrupt on his arrival in London, he is not above making some fortune out of his 'person' in his relationship with Bellaston. He is paid for selling his 'person' to Lady Bellaston, or in other words, for 'personating' as her beau in the 'Farce', exchanging his character for someone else's. Now Tom, too, finds himself liable to pay for this secret, and in fact, the secret in the above-quoted passage refers to Tom's, which he has just paid Honour to keep from Sophia.

Tom's affair with Bellaston is to be distinguished from that with Mrs. Waters, mainly because he affects a character not his own, and that for money, in Bellaston's

fashionable 'Farce', while he did not change his real character or convert his person into money with Waters. At Upton, Tom's character was misrepresented to Sophia through a series of misunderstandings, whereas in London Tom gets involved in the 'Farce of the World' with his eyes open and takes up Bellaston's measure to save his name. Truly, no character is too immaculate to be involved in this great 'Farce of the World' in Fielding's fiction, where the world *is* a 'Theatre' (VII. 1, p. 323), 'a Puppet-show', or a great farce (*Jonathan Wild*, III. 11), not even the 'Lily-white' Sophia. The greatest drama or 'Farce' in *Tom Jones* takes place in Book XIII, Chapter 11, where Lady Bellaston, Tom, and Sophia act three characters all different from their own. Most remarkably, Sophia plays her part so well, for all her confusion, that Bellaston is nearly justified in being puzzled at this *ingénue*.

I know not whether I should not admire her Cunning more than her Simplicity: Wonderful both! For though she understood not a Word of what passed between us, she yet had the Skill, the Assurance, the—what shall I call it? to deny to my Face, that she knows you, or even saw you before.

(XIV. 2, p. 744)

The crucial difference between the two actresses, Lady Bellaston and Sophia, reveals itself after the performance. The two contradictory letters from the distracted Bellaston, followed by her impatient visit to Tom, disclose her inability to reflect upon her real self. Bellaston keeps contradicting herself because she does not know which character to play next. She is as much a stranger to her true character as her successor, Mrs. James in *Amelia*. Sophia's uneasy self-reflection after her 'first Practice of Deceit' sharply contrasts with Lady Bellaston's reaction:

her Mind was not perfectly easy under this first Practice of Deceit; upon which, when she retired to her Chamber, she reflected with the highest Uneasiness and conscious Shame. Nor could the peculiar Hardship of her Situation, and the Necessity of the Case, at all reconcile her Mind to her Conduct; for the Frame of her Mind was too delicate to bear the Thought of having been guilty of a Falsehood, however qualified by Circumstances. Nor did this Thought once suffer her to close her Eyes during the whole succeeding Night. (XIII. 12, p. 738)

Ironically, the most innocent feels the 'highest Uneasiness and conscious Shame', while the most guilty accuses the others of laying a 'Scheme' against her (p. 744). As for the actor, Tom, though no less confounded than Lady Bellaston, at least feels guilty on Sophia's account: 'he would not have ventured to blow the Temper of Lady Bellaston into that Flame of which he had Reason to think it susceptible, and of which he feared the Consequence might be a Discovery to Sophia, which he dreaded' (XIV. 2, p. 745).

'Conscious Shame' or 'Consciousness of [...] Integrity' (XV. 12, p. 828) is indeed what distinguishes Allworthy, Sophia, and Tom, from other characters, even when they are actually or potentially in the wrong. It is particularly important for Tom to be able to reflect upon and judge himself, for he is by far the greatest sufferer from malicious slanders or accidental misrepresentations in the novel. In this regard, it is noteworthy how Tom vindicates his 'Innocence', with his character already branded by Blifil and Allworthy, against the lawyer Dowling's suspicion that he might well have expected to inherit Allworthy's estate:

'Indeed you wrong me, [...] I never had any View upon Mr. *Allworthy's* Fortune; nay, I believe, I may truly say, I never once considered what he could or might give me. This I solemnly declare, if he had done a Prejudice to his Nephew in my Favour, I would have undone it again. I had rather enjoy my own Mind than the Fortune of another Man. What is the poor Pride arising from a magnificent House, a numerous Equipage, a splendid Table, and from all the other Advantages or Appearances of Fortune, compared to the warm, solid Content, the swelling Satisfaction, the thrilling Transports, and the exulting Triumphs, which a good Mind enjoys, in the Contemplation of a generous, virtuous, noble, benevolent Action? I envy not *Blifil* in the Prospect of his Wealth; nor shall I envy him in the Possession of it. I would not think myself a Rascal half an Hour, to exchange Situations. I believe, indeed, Mr. *Blifil* suspected me of the Views you mention; and I suppose these Suspicions, as they arose from the Baseness of his own Heart, so they occasioned his Baseness to me. But, I thank Heaven, I know, I feel,—I feel my Innocence, my Friend; and I would not part with that Feeling for the World.

(XII. 10, p. 659)

Tom's emphatic conviction of his 'Innocence' ('I know, I feel,—I feel my Innocence') not only outweighs Dowling's insinuation but assures us with authority of the 'solid Content' of 'a good Mind' contemplating its own virtue and 'Innocence'.

Indeed Tom does many 'a generous, virtuous, noble, benevolent Action', on the ensuing journey, to a beggar (XII. 4), a highwayman (XII. 14), and the highwayman's family without knowing their relation (XIII. 8). Though he has had his own name disgraced, Tom is significantly respectful towards the name of every person he comes across. For example, the Millers might have been ruined, had it not been for Tom's exertion to save Nancy's name and honour. He is no less concerned for the name of the reformed highwayman Enderson (XIII. 10, p. 727). Above all, Sophia's name is so sacred to Tom that he would never mention her name in public, although Partridge always blabs it out to Tom's dismay.

Tom's journey to recover his 'Character' after his departure from Allworthy's house with an allegedly bankrupt 'Character' culminates in London, where he confronts the civil authority that charges him with the murder of Mr. Fitzpatrick. Tom makes his own judgement once and for all, *before* he is brought before a Justice of the Peace: 'I am convinced I am not guilty of Murder in the Eye of the Law, yet the Weight of Blood I find intolerable upon my Mind' (XVI. 10, p. 873). Tom's judgement goes beyond 'the Letter of the Law' (XV. 10, p. 823), claiming a higher authority than jurisdiction itself. His 'Conscience' is the 'severest of all Judges' (XV. 10, p. 823), for 'a good Conscience is never lawless in the worst-regulated State, and will provide those Laws for itself' (XVII. 3, p. 883). Given Allworthy's capacity as Justice as well as his injustice to Tom, Tom's present status beyond civil jurisdiction proves that he has not only overruled Allworthy's (mis)judgement but ultimately become a higher authority than his father-patron-justice. By the end of the 'History of the Foundling', the foundling hero attains the autonomous status as law-giver, 'not accountable to any Court of [...] Jurisdiction', and the Author of that history, as will appear in the following section, takes a parallel course in his pursuit of literary authority.

5. 'I am not to give up my Right'

Fielding was no stranger to the 'cruel Usage' of the audience ever since his entry into the theatre, where the audience, 'the drama's patrons', took every right to 'damn' or 'hiss' authors and their productions. Though he at times deeply grieved over this obdurate tendency in his audience, for example, as with the hissing of *The Universal Gallant* (Hume, p. 189), Fielding, in opposition years at least, remade it into a successful antiauthoritarian formula. Hence his intriguing *Eurydice Hissed*. His enlistment in ministerial service, though, posted him at the receiving end of virulent opposition and personal vilification, not least because 'he was better known than he had been in the days of *The Champion*: more had happened to him and more was known about his private affairs' (Coley, *The Jacobite's Journal*, General Introduction, p. lxxv). As Fielding's journals of the late 1740s make a principal issue of the relation of authorities to the public, so the relation of authors to audiences, readers, or critics becomes one of the paramount if not new concerns in *Tom Jones*. The opening of the novel is best understood in this context.

An Author ought to consider himself, not as a Gentleman who gives a private or eleemosynary Treat, but rather as one who keeps a pubic Ordinary, at which all Persons are welcome for their Money. In the former Case, it is well known, that the Entertainer provides what Fare he pleases; and tho' this should be very indifferent, and utterly disagreeable to the Taste of his Company, they must not find any Fault; nay, on the contrary, Good-Breeding forces them outwardly to approve and to commend whatever is set before them. Now the contrary of this happens to the Master of an Ordinary. Men who pay for what they eat, will insist on gratifying their Palates, however nice and whimsical these may prove; and if every Thing is not agreeable to their Taste, will challenge a Right to censure, to abuse, and to d—n their Dinner without Controul. (I. 1, p. 31)

Of this much quoted pronouncement by the Author of *Tom Jones*, the conventional view is best represented by Battestin's claim that it 'presents the novelist as the keeper of a public ordinary that celebrates the feast of life' (*Amelia*, General Introduction, p. xxii). In my view, however, what is really at issue in this critical

opening is not the 'feast of life' but the 'Right' of the paying public 'to censure, to abuse, and to d—n' the Author as 'Master of an Ordinary', over which the nominal 'Master' has no 'Controul' whatsoever. *Tom Jones*, the most robust of Fielding's literary undertakings to date, begins with professing the Author's want of 'Right'.

The equation of an author to the 'Master of a public Ordinary' underlines, above all, the subjection of the one to the same commercial rationale as the other. Authors involved in the commerce of letters are obliged in one way or another to serve their reader-customers, to gratify 'their Palates', thus specialising in their kind of public catering. The taint of duncehood notwithstanding, the Author of *Tom Jones* is not opposed to the idea of living by the pen in itself. His 'Invocation' (XIII. 1), for example, makes this clear enough. The Author invokes 'bright Love of Fame' to teach him 'not only to foresee, but to enjoy, nay, even to feed on future Praise' (p. 683), but 'future Praise' alone is far from enough for him and his family to 'feed on'. The 'much plumper Dame', Fortune, 'whom the well-seasoned Beef, and Pudding richly stained with Plumbs delight', is not unwelcome by any means.

Come, thou jolly Substance, with thy shining Face, keep back thy Inspiration, but hold forth thy tempting Rewards; thy shining, chinking Heap; thy quickly-convertible Bank-bill, big with unseen Riches; thy often-varying Stock; the warm, the comfortable House; and, lastly, a fair Portion of that bounteous Mother, whose flowing Breasts yield redundant Sustenance for all her numerous Offspring, did not some too greedily and wantonly drive their Brethren from the Teat. Come thou, and if I am too tasteless of thy valuable Treasures, warm my Heart with the transporting Thought of conveying them to others. Tell me, that through thy Bounty, the prattling Babes, whose innocent Play hath often been interrupted by my Labours, may one Time be amply rewarded for them. (p. 685)

The present Author's invocation of the 'Rewards', if not 'Inspiration', of 'fat Substance' is no more ironic than similar professions in Fielding's other writings. 'Pudding' is no unimportant concern of Alexander Drawcansir, who facetiously recommends every author, even the most mercenary, to mind 'Fame' for the 'simple Reason that it directly leads to Pudding' (*The Covent-Garden Journal*, No. 60, p. 323). In a less humorous context, Fielding owns with some emotion that concern for

his 'family', rather than the 'public good', compels him to write the journal of his final *Voyage to Lisbon*, and that 'the public was not the principal deity to which my life was offered a sacrifice' (Introduction, p. 28). In the above invocation to 'Substance' in behalf of the 'prattling Babes', if not the Author himself, sarcasm is reserved for the flatterers of 'the Pride of the Patron' or the 'well-fed Bookseller', not the hungry authors who live by serving the public with the pen (p. 684). To be sure, the Author hardly endorses the 'Grubstreet School', so that he declines the 'Inspiration' or Grubbean 'Erudition' of the 'plumper' muse. Speaking of her 'Rewards', then, there is no other way for an author to come by them but through the middlemen, that is, the public. What truly concerns the Author is that an author is unduly deprived of 'Right' in dealing with the paying public. In this context, what I argued with reference to the relation of authors to patrons in my foregoing analysis of Joseph's reflection on the paintings in the possession of the great, can be applied to the relation of authors to less great buyers. Money creates only material ownership, while the primal ownership of a literary production ought to be the exclusive and unalienable 'Right' of the author, not the patron nor public readership. In reality, though, the public seem to strip authors of every 'Right' there is, and the Author of *Tom Jones* is against this, not the commerce of authorship itself.

The dilemma for the Author is that, whatever his opinion of the audience, he is, by the nature of his job, obliged to address them. In this regard, Nicholas Hudson rightly points out the Author's 'lurking hostility to his audience' and consequent 'rhetoric' to 'screen' himself from this very hostility in addressing them. An ethical question ensues from this Author's hostility to his audience, in that it is tied to a 'skepticism concerning his doctrine of the good heart', thus enervating his self-assumed powers of moral tutelage from within.¹⁷ For one thing, the Author is

¹⁷ Nicholas Hudson, 'Fielding's Hierarchy of Dialogue: Meta-Response and the Reader of *Tom Jones*', *PQ*, 68 (1989), 177-94 (pp. 178-79, 193n). As Hudson remarks, modern criticism is increasingly interested in 'Fielding's paradoxical links with villainous rhetoric in the novel' (p. 178). See, for example, Susan McNamara, 'Mirrors of Fiction within *Tom Jones*: The Paradox of Self-Reference', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 12 (1979), 372-90, Jonathan Lamb, 'Exemplarity and Excess in Fielding's Fiction', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 1 (1989), 187-207, and John Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary*:

uncertain of the disposition of his reader, as he professes in the opening chapter of Book X, 'to be perused by modern Critics': 'it is impossible we should know what Sort of Person thou wilt be' (p. 523). This is a truthful rendering of the Author's fundamental uncertainty of his reader or customer, which will appear even more intensified in *Amelia*.¹⁸ Worse than uncertainty, the Author's distrust of his audience is barely camouflaged in his varying addresses to them. Given the extended indictment against 'Critics' as slanderers of books and their authors (XI. 1) and many similar comments through the novel, the 'Critics' are likely to be the worst part of the Author's addressees. The Author's own note to the word 'Criticks', though, seems to exhibit his scepticism of his readership at large: 'By this Word here, and in most other Parts of our Work, we mean every Reader in the World' (VIII. 1, p. 396). No credit goes to the 'Reader' or 'Critic', addressed as 'my sagacious Friend', 'a little Reptile of a Critic' (X. 1, p. 525), an 'odious Vermin' or worse (XI. 1, p. 567). Apart from the self-evidently abusive 'Reptile' and 'Vermin', the attribute 'sagacious' is generally not complimentary in the novel or all Fielding's writings, 'sagacity' signifying the same self-seeking, worldly cunning as embodied, for the best example, in every 'sagacious' bookseller in Fielding's writings. Moreover, the Author seems as ironical in addressing the 'good-natured' reader, as in describing 'the good-natured Disposition' of Allworthy's parishioners (p. 59).

It is no coincidence that the Author finds the same 'good-natured Disposition' in both his audience and Allworthy's parishioners or audience, given his performances as Justice of the Peace, on which account I have equated Squire Allworthy to the master of a public house called Paradise Hall. In his 'Farewel to the Reader', the Author tells the reader that 'I question not but thou hast been told, among other

Fiction and the Architecture of Mind in Eighteenth-Century England (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), Chs. 5 and 6.

¹⁸ We can measure by this to what extent Fielding's society was advanced in the process towards what Raymond Williams terms as the 'crisis of the knowable community' accompanied by the split 'between knowable relationships and an unknown, unknowable, overwhelming society', the culmination of which Williams recognises in the novels of the late 1840s: *The English Novel: From Dickens to Lawrence* (St Albans: Paladin, 1974), Introduction. Though it precedes the novels Williams refers to by almost a century, *Amelia* is particularly pertinent to this issue, as I shall demonstrate in Chapter V, Section 1.

Stories of me, that thou wast to travel with a very scurrilous Fellow' (XVIII. 1, p. 914). Such stories were certainly told of the Author of *The Jacobite's Journal*, 'a pension'd Hackney to a third Rate M—r'.¹⁹ The majority of them focused on his being the hireling of his paymaster Lyttelton, not a few addressed to the paymaster himself. For example, an essay published in *Old England* (12 November 1748) a week after the discontinuance of the journal reminds Lyttelton of his recruitment of a 'Drawcansir':

This *Drawcansir* was immediately put upon the *honourable* List of *weekly Pensioners*, with an Advance of one Week's Pay in Hand, by Way of *Entrance*: while future Payments were to attend the Event of the Labours of the Week, under your *cautionary* Care and special Direction. (Coley, p. lxxv)

No wonder that both patron and author went through similar ordeals in connection with *Tom Jones*, the manuscript of which was seen in progress by Lyttelton and recommended to his acquaintance well before publication. Lyttelton's puffs, joined by Pitt's, 'raised the expectations of the public and stimulated an extraordinary demand for *Tom Jones* before it was published' (Battestein, *Life*, p. 441). The success of *Tom Jones* fuelled the malignant attacks on both its author and puffer (Battestein, General Introduction, p. lvi), as exemplified by the following letter to 'Selim Slim', that is, Lyttelton, published in *Old England* (27 May 1749):

That this motely History of Bastardism, Fornication and Adultery, is highly prejudicial to the Cause of Religion, in several Parts of it, is apparent in the gross Ridicule and Abuse which are wantonly thrown on religious Characters. [...] Is this, Sir, 'the sincere Endeavours of your Author in recommending Goodness and Innocence?' Or, is the marrying of a Reverend Clergyman to a common Harlot his Way of *rewarding* Virtue? It is amazing, Sir, you should venture on commending a Book so truly profligate, of such evil Tendency, and offensive to every chaste Reader, so discouraging to Virtue and detrimental to Religion! (Paulson and Lockwood, p. 168)²⁰

¹⁹ *The London Evening Post*, 13–15 December 1748, quoted in Coley, General Introduction, p. lxxvi. For more specimens of opposition calumny of Fielding's editorship of the journal, see pp. lxx–lxxxii.

²⁰ Fielding's literary rivals were no less forward in abusing him and the novel than his political enemies. Samuel Richardson 'persisted in his haughty refusal to read *Tom Jones*, which, however, did

The Author of *Tom Jones* had as many reasons to deplore the slanderous disposition of his own audience as of Allworthy's, and to define the 'Critic' as 'a common Slanderer [...] of the Reputations of Men' and 'of Books' (XI. 1, p. 567). Faced with the same kind of audience as Allworthy's calumnious parishioners, the Author finds a measure of self-vindication in defending Allworthy against the unreasoned slanders of his parishioners in the novel.

The Author's apology for Allworthy, however, is significantly limited, as we have remarked in analysing his characterisation in the novel. Given the Lyttelton-Allworthy identification, Fielding's 'Dedication' to his patron is an important contextual document that sheds much light on the nature of this limited apology within the novel. The dedication is directed by two conflicting needs on Fielding's part, that is, to eulogise Lyttelton as right judge and patron of true genius and nonetheless to detach his patronage from the performance of the novel itself. Rothstein is right in reading the compliment to Lyttelton, especially to his impartial appreciation of true genius, as nothing but Fielding's self-compliment in effect, in the sense that by underlining his obligation to such a discerning and fair-playing patron, Fielding puffs up himself and his novel and appropriates the virtues of the dedicatee as the dedicator's (Rothstein, pp. 100–02).

I here present you with the Labours of some Years of my Life. What Merit these Labours have is already known to yourself. If, from your favourable Judgment, I have conceived some Esteem for them, it cannot be imputed to Vanity; since I should have agreed as implicitly to your Opinion, had it been given in Favour of any other Man's Production. Negatively, at least, I may be allowed to say, that had I been sensible of any great Demerit in the Work, you are the last Person to whose Protection I would have ventured to recommend it.

From the Name of my Patron, indeed, I hope my Reader will be convinced, at his very Entrance on this Work, that he will find in the whole Course of it nothing prejudicial to the Cause of Religion and Virtue; nothing inconsistent with the strictest Rules of Decency, nor which can offend even the chastest Eye in the Perusal. On the contrary, I declare, that to recommend

not deter him from summarily damning the book and its "vicious" author', and Tobias Smollett 'would not scruple to asperse his character' (Battestin, General Introduction, p. lviii).

Goodness and Innocence hath been my sincere Endeavour in this History.
This honest Purpose you have been pleased to think I have attained. (pp. 6–7)

On the other hand, to own his recognition 'by' the patron, to say nothing of his material indebtedness to him, is potentially detrimental to Fielding's independent relation to the patron, which is prerequisite to his notion of literary authority. First of all, it is necessary for him to clear himself of the debt to his patron. Yet the dedication is not in itself a repayment. Fielding opens the dedication with this remark: 'Notwithstanding your constant Refusal, when I asked Leave to prefix your Name to this Dedication, I must still insist on my Right to desire your Protection of this Work' (p. 3). The pleasant scenario runs like this: Lyttelton declines Fielding's 'public Praise' (p. 6), implicitly discharging him of obligations, to the effect that they are 'freely' given in recognition of his merit; Fielding still persists in dedicating the novel to the patron out of 'free' will, not out of obligation. The relationship is equal and free of obligation, and besides, the initiative is Fielding's in dedicating the novel to the patron despite his refusal. What is most noteworthy about this dedication, though, is Fielding's consistent disjoining of Lyttelton's material patronage from his own authorial 'Labours'.

Sir, without your Assistance this History had never been completed. Be not startled at the Assertion. I do not intend to draw on you the Suspicion of being a Romance Writer. I mean no more than that I partly owe to you my Existence during great Part of the Time which I have employed in composing it [...].

And what are your Objections to the Allowance of the Honour which I have solicited? Why, you have commended the Book so warmly, that you should be ashamed of reading your Name before the Dedication. Indeed, Sir, if the Book itself doth not make you ashamed of your Commendations, nothing that I can here write will, or ought. I am not to give up my Right to your Protection and Patronage, because you have commended my Book: For though I acknowledge so many Obligations to you, I do not add this to the Number. (pp. 4–5)

The author will not yield his 'Right' to the patron, though he owns his obligations to him, as one who not only supported the 'Existence' of the author during the composition but 'commended the Book so warmly' towards its publication. By

implication, the author is convinced of the merit of his performance, regardless of the 'Commendations' of the patron or anybody, and his 'guise of not needing anybody's praise', as Rothstein puts it, is a declaration of authority not to be judged by anybody but himself (p. 101). By the same authority, the author shields his 'Right' from any damnations as well as 'Commendations'. In this regard, the authority of the author of *Tom Jones* is of the same nature as that of the foundling hero at the end of the novel.

The writer of the said letter to 'Selim Slim' called *Tom Jones* a 'motely History of Bastardism, Fornication and Adultery'. As if anticipating this and similar charges, the Author of *Tom Jones* defines literary slander as charge of bastardy, arguing that a book should be considered 'as the Author's Offspring, and indeed as the Child of his Brain' (XI. 1, p. 568).

As no one can call another Bastard, without calling the Mother a Whore, so neither can any one give the Names of sad Stuff, horrid Nonsense, &c. to a Book, without calling the Author a Blockhead. (p. 569)

To be sure, the foundling Tom is the greatest sufferer from endless slanders or misrepresentations in the novel, to the degree that he remains deprived of his identity up to the very end of the story. It seems natural that the Author of the history of 'Bastardism', whose 'Character' as well as his 'Book' has been viciously vilified all these years, should imagine his literary fortune running parallel with that of his bastard hero.²¹ Allworthy is himself subject to a series of calumnies, and to be defended by the Author. In relation to Tom, however, Allworthy is the very judge who sentences to bankruptcy the 'Character' of his protégé, which is the only intrinsic property of the foundling. The irony in Tom's relation to Allworthy is that his 'Right' to inherit Allworthy's estate derives from his recovery of 'Character', which requires Tom to repeal Allworthy's judgement on his 'Character' and thus to establish his higher authority as judge.

²¹ Robert L. Chibka makes a similar remark with regard to the parallel between Fielding's literary fortunes and Tom's social ones: "Taking 'The Serious' Seriously: The Introductory Chapters of *Tom Jones*", *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 31 (1990), 23–46 (p. 35).

As I have argued in the foregoing section on Tom's 'Character', Tom ultimately becomes 'a law to himself', his 'Conscience' being the 'severest of all Judges' of the highest authority. It is on the same ground that Allworthy's truer authority is justified in the novel. The dedication asserts the same kind of 'Right' not to be judged by others, particularly not by the patron, a social superior and civil authority whose 'Protection' and 'Commendations', with however 'well-guided Condescension' (*Joseph Andrews*, p. 190), cripples the protégé's claim to an independent achievement. To the same effect, the Author enthrones himself as law-giving 'Founder of a new Province of Writing':

I am at liberty to make what Laws I please therein. And these Laws, my Readers, whom I consider as my Subjects, are bound to believe in and to obey; with which that they may readily and chearfully comply, I do hereby assure them that I shall principally regard their Ease and Advantage in all such Institutions: For I do not, like a *jure divino* Tyrant, imagining that they are my Slaves or my Commodity. I am, indeed, set over them for their own Good only, and was created for their Use, and not they for mine. Nor do I doubt, while I make their Interest the great Rule of my Writings, they will unanimously concur in supporting my Dignity, and in rendering me all the Honour I shall deserve or desire. (II. 1, pp. 77–78)

This proclamation, quoted as often as the 'Master of an Ordinary' passage, is generally accepted at face value, as an authoritative manifesto of the 'new Province of Writing'. In my view, though, the conventional view fails to recognise many significant points. For one thing, the present Author's assertion that the readers 'will unanimously concur in supporting my Dignity, and in rendering me all the Honour I shall deserve or desire', partakes of the same kind of self-mockery as Vinegar's or even Trott-Plaid's similarly Drawcansirian declarations. His reader-'Subjects', as he sees them, are not known for their deference to authority but predisposed 'to censure, to abuse, and to d—n [...] without Controul', just like Allworthy's parishioners. The Author's standing is even weaker than the squire-justice's, because his so-called 'Subjects' are in reality his customers. The customer is the king, so that the Author's assurance of care for the 'Ease and Advantage' of his reader is curiously reminiscent of similar remarks by masters of various public houses and their analogues. The

Author's claim to royal prerogative is in itself a self-mockery and as 'wildly incredible' as Luckless's ascension to the kingship of Bantam. What really matters in this passage is the Author's refusal to be judged by others: 'I shall not look upon myself as accountable to any Court of Critical Jurisdiction whatever' (p. 77). However, given his full consciousness of the malignant audience, even that statement reveals the Author's wishful imagining of inner authority, like Tom's 'Conscience', that can keep him from being overwhelmed by their damnations and convince him of his own merit and achievement. The Author of *Tom Jones* wishfully imagines his literary authority, only by refusing to give up his 'Right' to either his customers or the patron.

Chapter V. Drawcansir Hissed

The Truth may be, that a Man of good Inclinations finds his Office filled with such Corruption by the Iniquity of his Predecessors, that he may despair of being capable of purging it; and so sits down contented, as *Augeas* did with the Filth of his Stables, not because he thought them the better, or that such Filth was really necessary to a Stable; but that he despaired of sufficient Force to cleanse them.

Amelia (XI. 2)

When Hercules undertook to cleanse the Stables of Augeas, (a Work not much unlike my present Undertaking) should any little Clod of Dirt, more filthy perhaps, than all the rest, have chanced to bedawb him, how unworthy his Spirit would it have been, to have polluted his Hands, by seizing the dirty Clod, and crumbling it to Pieces. He should have known that such Accidents are incident to such an Undertaking: which, though both a useful and heroic Office, was yet none of the cleanliest; since no Man, I believe, ever removed great Quantities of Dirt from any Place, without finding some of it sticking to his Skirts.

The Covent-Garden Journal (18 January 1752)

'And so ends the dismal Ditty.'

'D—n me,' cries one, 'did ever mortal hear such d—nd Stuff?'

Amelia (X. 2)

By the time he was composing *Amelia*, Fielding had come through the success of the two earlier 'romances' and become an author of some established reputation, however dubious the reputation of 'a Romance Writer' may have been. Fielding's raised reputation at the publication of his last novel can be measured by the rise of his price from one to two hundred pounds per volume: he was paid £183. 11s. and £600 for the copies of *Joseph Andrews* (in two volumes) and *Tom Jones* (in six) respectively, whereas he received the sum of £800 for the copy of his third and last novel *Amelia* (in four volumes).¹ After the success of the two earlier novels, Fielding presumably felt less anxious about the generic authority itself of the third, and attempted a serious moral satire, in conjunction with his socio-legal concerns as reformist Justice of the Peace. But *Amelia* was all but universally 'damn'd', which attests that the number and atrocity of Fielding's enemies increased in proportion to the rise of his reputation and

¹ *Amelia*, ed. by Martin C. Battestin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), General Introduction, p. xlvii. Further references to this edition are given in the text after quotations.

price. Political dissidence had already caused vehement attacks on Trott-Plaid,² and now envy fuelled the more criticism. Both literary and moral authority were denied to even an established and high-priced author like the post-*Tom Jones* Fielding, who found himself struggling hard with that very question of authority in his last novel and *The Covent-Garden Journal* (4 January–25 November 1752).

With regard to his relation to the patrons, Fielding was by this time relieved of the detested ministerial writing, though in possession of the trophy of the Bow Street magistracy. He was in fact put in a 'most awkward' situation in late 1751, when the Duke of Bedford, to whom Fielding owed the magistracy and most substantial favours in conjunction with it, was forced to resign from the ministry (Battestin, *Life*, pp. 446–50, and Cleary, pp. 284–87). Some of Fielding's patrons including Lyttelton remained 'in', while Bedford, after Dodington, went 'out' to join the opposition. Fielding had good reason to refrain from overtly eulogising or criticising specific patrons in either camp (Cleary, p. 286). He set *Amelia* in the 1730s, technically within Walpole's regime, and disclaimed 'any Dealing in Politics' in the opening leader of the journal (p. 15).

Fielding concentrates on the authority of a 'great and good Writer' over the 'Morals of his Countrymen' in his last two literary undertakings, in conjunction with his reformist campaign as practising Justice of the Peace. Yet, what characterises his most serious analyses of his society and of an author's role in it is his fundamental awareness of the limited authority at best of an individual author or magistrate in striving for a moral education of the public. First of all, we can observe his despairing view of his milieu in *Amelia*, where London is depicted as a huge public house accommodating global corruption. Against this overwhelming corruption, a few good individuals, including the hero Captain Booth, appear critically powerless, and even Dr. Harrison's tireless manoeuvres to guard the Booths disclose his limited power. Likewise, the good but weary magistrate at the end of the novel epitomises the

² See General Introduction, pp. l–lvi, Blanchard, Ch. 3, and Paulson and Lockwood, pp. 286–336, 345–52.

disabled 'Justice Business', in parallel with the 'd—nd' author business of Dr. Harrison or indeed the Author of *Amelia* himself. We then come to the last of Fielding's Authors, Alexander Drawcansir, the aptly named Author of *The Covent-Garden Journal*, whose final campaign against cultural degeneracy, accompanied by a most thorough analysis of the 'Commonwealth of Literature', embodies the Drawcansirian moral warfare of an Author, a 'laughing Stock', without authority.

1. London, a Public House

Amelia is set in London, of which Fielding's view was always sombre: as George Sherburn says, whenever he writes about the metropolis, 'his tone becomes grim, hard, distressing'.³ There is no comparison, though, between the London of *Amelia* and that of *Joseph Andrews*, in which we are given only a glimpse through Joseph's attendance on Lady Booby at the fashionable entertainments of the town. Its gloomy as well as gay facades do appear in the last six books of *Tom Jones*, but they constitute only a third of the entire novel and their depressing presence at the end of the novel is at least balanced by the healthful prospect of the country in the foregoing story. In terms of settings alone, *Jonathan Wild* is closest to *Amelia*, as the former deals exclusively with Newgate and the criminal underworld of London, though it varies in approach from the latter. In *Amelia*, Booth's courtship of Amelia is indeed laid in the country, but it feels categorically different from what happens in the earlier two thirds of *Tom Jones*, for example, in that the outer setting is a prison cell. The London of *Amelia* is markedly claustrophobic in atmosphere, as its story is most of all one of confinement; the hero Captain Booth goes through three actual confinements, once in the prison and twice in the bailiff's house, alias the sponging house, and constantly imprisons himself in his lodgings in fear of arrest for debts. The metropolis is in itself an extended prison house, which in *Amelia* takes on the distinct appearance of a 'public house'.

³ George Sherburn, 'Fielding's Social Outlook', *PQ*, 35 (1956), 1–23 (p. 10).

With regard to the 'public house' qualities of London as metaphorical prison or the real prison in it, Battestin's account of the opening of *Amelia* seems to me to overestimate its contrast to that of *Tom Jones*:

If the opening chapter of *Tom Jones* presents the novelist as the keeper of a public ordinary who celebrates the feast of life, *Amelia* begins with the author's ironic observations on the 'English Constitution' and carries us at once into the courtroom and the prison, institutions meant to preserve the health of the body politic but which instead perpetuate injustice and corruption. (General Introduction, p. xxii)

Though right in perceiving the implied analogy between 'the English Constitution' and human constitution, between 'the courtroom and the prison' and 'a public ordinary', Battestin is taken in by the deceptive festivity of the 'public ordinary' in *Tom Jones* into unduly emphasising the variance rather than the deep-seated correspondence between the two novels. Venality, not festivity, is the most salient feature of the public ordinaries and their keepers in Fielding's fiction, and the same is true of their equivalents. Thus Justice Thrasher in his night court (I. 2) is marked with essentially the same venality as, for example, the Tow-wouses.

The ensuing scenes in the prison, where Booth is sent by Thrasher, confirm with full details that the governor of the prison is in every sense keeping a public house.

MR. *Booth* (for we shall not trouble you with the rest) was no sooner arrived in the Prison, than a Number of Persons gathered round him, all demanding *Garnish*; to which Mr. *Booth* not making a ready Answer, as indeed he did not understand the Word, some were going to lay hold of him, when a Person of apparent Dignity came up and insisted that no one should affront the Gentleman. This Person then, who was no less than the Master or Keeper of the Prison, turning towards Mr. *Booth*, acquainted him, that it was the Custom of the Place for every Prisoner, upon his first Arrival there, to give something to the former Prisoners to make them drink. This, he said, was what they called *Garnish*; and concluded with advising his new Customer to draw his Purse upon the present Occasion. (I. 3, pp. 25–26)

Such is the resemblance of the 'Master or Keeper of the Prison' to a real publican that even his address to the 'new Customer' as 'Gentleman' reminds us of the common courtesies of a publican to his customers. His customers or the inmates of the prison,

too, behave in accordance with this 'Master', so that Booth nearly imagines that they are in a 'happier place'.

Could his own Thoughts indeed have suffered him a Moment to forget where he was, the Dispositions of the other Prisoners might have induced him to believe that he had been in a happier Place: For much the greater part of his Fellow-Sufferers, instead of wailing and repining at their Condition, were laughing, singing and diverting themselves with various kinds of Sports and Gambols. (p. 27)

A scene like this exposes the illusion of the 'feast of life' that Battestin sees taking place in a public house. Besides, under the surface of such deceptive festivity runs a pointedly realistic representation of prison realities in Fielding's times, as Mona Scheuermann details them from a contemporary document, John Howard's *State of the Prisons* (1777):

Prisoners were subject to a range of fees—fees upon entry, fees upon leaving (even if he were acquitted of any wrongdoing, a man could not leave until he had paid all the accumulated fees), fees for the putting on and taking off of chains, fees for room, fees for the privilege of having guests, and most horribly, fees for food and drink. One of Howard's major complaints is that the keepers are permitted to sell food and drink to the prisoners and are therefore essentially keeping a public house; it is in their interest to encourage consumption, especially of liquor, and therefore to contribute to the degeneracy of their charges. The man without money might just about starve, since almost no food was provided for him by law. Debtors, obviously, would be hard put to pay for themselves; absurdly, in many cases the law specifically omitted debtors from provisions made for the support of felons. Beyond the many fees demanded by keepers, the prisoner was also subject to garnish, the fee demanded of incoming prisoners by those already in jail. If the newcomer had no cash, he was obliged to give up some part of his clothing. Finally, on the subject of fees, Howard objects also to the 'extortion of bailiffs. These detain in their houses (properly enough denominated spunging-houses), at an enormous expense, prisoners who have money.'⁴

In *Amelia*, the 'extortion of bailiffs' is also fully dramatised in the episodes involving Bondum the bailiff, who detains Booth in his house twice. Not only does this master

⁴ Mona Scheuermann, *Social Protest in the Eighteenth-Century English Novel* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1985), p. 21.

of the sponging house provide his customers with coach-hire, food and drink, and so forth, but keeps strict accounts and encourages his customers into more consumption.

The first Demand made upon *Booth* was for Coach-hire, which amounted to two Shillings, according to the Bailiff's Account; that being just double the legal Fare. He was then asked if he did not chuse a Bowl of Punch; to which he having answered in the Negative, the Bailiff replied, 'Nay, Sir, just as you please. I don't ask you to drink, if you don't chuse it; but certainly you know the Custom, the House is full of Prisoners, and I can't afford Gentlemen a Room to themselves for nothing.' (VIII. 1, p. 311)

'I don't desire to do any Thing barbarous. I know how to treat Gentlemen with Civility as well as another. And when People pay as they go, and spend their Money like Gentlemen, I am sure no Body can accuse me of any Incivility since I have been in the Office. And if you intend to be merry To-night, I am not the Man that will prevent it—Tho' I say it, you may have as good a Supper drest here as at any Tavern in Town.' (VIII. 10, p. 351)

Like normal public houses, the prison in *Amelia* offers bed as well as food and drink. Worth quoting in full is the following scene in which the public house quality of the prison reaches its climax. Just on the brink of Booth's adultery with Miss Mathews,

the Governor of the enchanted Castle interrupted them, and entering the Room without any Ceremony, acquainted the Lady and Gentleman, that it was locking-up time; and addressing *Booth*, by the Name of Captain, asked him if he would not please to have a Bed; adding, that he might have one in the next Room to the Lady, but that it would come dear; for that he never let a Bed in that Room under a Guinea, nor could he afford it cheaper to his Father.

No Answer was made to this Proposal; but Miss *Mathews*, who had already learnt some of the Ways of the House, said, she believed Mr. *Booth* would like to drink a Glass of something; upon which, the Governor immediately trumpeted forth the Praises of his Rack-Punch, and without waiting for any farther Commands, presently produced a large Bowl of that Liquor.

The Governor having recommended the Goodness of his Punch by a hearty Draught, began to revive the other Matter, saying that he was just going to Bed, and must first lock up.—'But suppose,' said Miss *Mathews*, with a Smile, 'the Captain and I should have a Mind to sit up all Night.'—'With all my Heart,' said the Governor; 'but I expect a Consideration for those Matters. For my Part, I don't enquire into what doth not concern me; but single and double are two things. If I lock up double, I expect half a Guinea; and I'm sure the Captain cannot think that's out of the way—It is but the Price of a Bagnio.' (IV. 1, pp. 152–53)

The governor of the prison turns out to be keeping a tavern by day and a 'Bagnio', as he puts it, by night. 'Having received his Fee', which happens to be 'but the Price of a Bagnio', he leaves 'the Gentleman and the Lady' (lip-services to his customers) alone in a 'criminal Conversation' at last (IV. 2, p. 154), after the prolonged narrative seduction over the first three books of *Amelia*.⁵

In the prison, the prisoner-customers are served only in proportion to the fees they pay, but it is not provisions or accommodation alone that they pay for. As remarked in *Tom Jones*, money purchases 'character', too. Thus each customer is defined as 'Gentleman' or not, in accordance with the amount of money tendered. Bondum's definition of a 'Gentleman' is particularly noteworthy in this regard.

'He calls himself a Gentleman,' said *Bondum*; 'but I am sure I never saw any thing genteel by him. In a Week that he hath been in my House, he hath drank only part of one Bottle of Wine. I intend to carry him to *Newgate* within a Day or two, if he can't find Bail, which I suppose he will not be able to do: For every Body says he is an undone Man. He hath run out all he hath by Losses in Business, and one way or other; and he hath a Wife and seven Children. — Here was the whole Family here the other Day, all howling together. I never saw such a beggarly Crew; I was almost ashamed to see them in my House. I thought they seemed fitter for *Bridewell* than any other Place. To be sure, I do not reckon him as proper Company for such as you, Sir; but there is another Prisoner in the House that I dare say you will like very much. He is, indeed, very much of a Gentleman, and spends his Money like one. I have had him only three Days, and I am afraid he won't stay much longer. They say, indeed, he is a Gamester; but what is that to me or any one, as long as a Man appears as a Gentleman? I always love to speak by People as I find. And, in my Opinion, he is fit Company for the greatest Lord in the Land; for he hath very good Cloaths, and Money enough. (VIII. 2, pp. 314–15)

In Bondum's house, Robinson the gamester and fraud is a 'Gentleman', whereas the other presumably real gentleman cannot pass for such, since he cannot afford to 'appear as a Gentleman'. Purchased appearance replaces reality in public houses, and a persistent inversion of appearance and reality marks the earlier prison scenes, too, in

⁵ The relation of narrative seduction to sexual seduction in these books is discussed in Eric Rothstein *Systems of Order and Inquiry in Later Eighteenth-Century Fiction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 173, and Elizabeth T. Kenney, 'The Inside Story: Interpolated Narrative in Fielding's Novels' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Boston College, 1990), Ch. IV. Kenney pays particular attention to the fact that most narrative actions take place in public houses in Fielding's novels.

which Booth gets lost in a labyrinth of one deceptive appearance after another, with Robinson himself as guide.

The first Persons whom they past by were three Men in Fetters, who were enjoying themselves very merrily over a Bottle of Wine and a Pipe of Tobacco. These, Mr. *Robinson* informed his Friend, were three Street-robbers, and were all certain of being hanged the ensuing Sessions. So inconsiderable an Object, said he, is Misery to light Minds, when it is at any Distance. [...]

A very pretty Girl then advanced towards them, whose Beauty Mr. *Booth* could not help admiring the Moment he saw her; declaring, at the same time, he thought she had great Innocence in her Countenance. *Robinson* said she was committed thither as an idle and disorderly Person, and a common Street-walker. As she past by Mr. *Booth*, she damn'd his Eyes, and discharged a Volley of Words, every one of which was too indecent to be repeated. [...]

A well-drest Man then walked surlily by them, whom Mr. *Robinson* reported to have been committed on an Indictment found against him for a most horrid Perjury; 'but', says he, 'we expect him to be bailed Today.'

(I. 4, pp. 32–34)

The images are graphically disturbing in themselves: a 'Man prostrate on the Ground' with 'frantic Actions', 'a little Creature sitting by herself in a Corner and crying bitterly', and 'a young Woman of Rags sitting on the Ground, and supporting the Head of an old Man in her Lap' who appears 'to be giving up the Ghost' (pp. 32–34). However, what disturbs us most in the prison scenes as a whole is the fact that everything is not what it seems and we cannot feel confident of what we see any longer.

The London of *Amelia*, it can be argued, is as much a huge play-house full of deceptive appearances as it is a prison-house, the one as well as the other being a typical public house. To equate a play-house with a public house, as in the plays, especially in *Eurydice Hissed*, is indeed one of Fielding's most chronic habits, and by no coincidence, theatrical allusions are particularly abundant in *Amelia*, which depicts its milieu as a grand public house.⁶ Apart from direct quotations from various plays, implicit references to theatricality or role-playing pervade the whole novel,

⁶ Rothstein puts special emphasis on 'the train of references to *Othello*' in *Amelia*, even maintaining that Booth takes his surname from the actor Barton Booth, 'the most famous Othello' of Fielding's times, and his treacherous friend 'James' derives his name from 'Iago', the Spanish equivalent to 'James' (p. 195).

thus exposing the actors and actresses who densely people the London of *Amelia*. The first major actress is Miss Mathews, whose highly histrionic performance, in a manner reminiscent of the heroine of a revenge tragedy or another Lady Macbeth, is exemplified in the following scene, where at Booth's mention of the cause of her imprisonment, that is, 'Murder',

she started from her Chair, repeating, 'Murder! Oh! 'tis Music in my Ears. — You have heard then the Cause of my Commitment, my Glory, my Delight, my Reparation!—Yes, my old Friend, this is the Hand, this is the Arm that drove the Penknife to his Heart. Unkind Fortune, that not one Drop of his Blood reached my Hand.—Indeed, Sir, I would never have washed it from it.—But tho' I have not the Happiness to see it on my Hand, I have the glorious Satisfaction of remembering I saw it run in Rivers on the Floor; I saw it forsake his Cheeks. I saw him fall a Martyr to my Revenge. And is the killing a Villain to be called Murder? Perhaps the Law calls it so.—Let it call it what it will, or punish me as it pleases.—Punish me!—no, no—That is not in the Power of Man—not of that Monster Man, Mr. *Booth*. I am undone, am revenged, and have now no more Business for Life; let them take it from me when they will.'

Our poor Gentleman turned pale with Horror at this Speech, and the Ejaculation of *Good Heavens! what do I hear!* burst spontaneously from his Lips. Nor can we wonder at this, tho' he was the bravest of Men; for her Voice, her Looks, her Gestures, were properly adapted to the Sentiments she exprest. Such indeed was her Image, that neither could *Shakespeare* describe, nor *Hogarth* paint, nor *Clive* act a Fury in higher Perfection. (I. 6, p. 43)

The commentary at the end makes explicit Miss Mathews' role-playing. She is appearing or 'acting' a character that is not her own, and as such she deserves to be called a 'Hypocrite' as it is defined in *Tom Jones* (VII. 1).

Captain and Mrs. James, Mrs. Ellison, and the unnamed 'noble Lord' are as accomplished actors and actresses as Miss Mathews. Captain James is introduced as 'one of the best-natured Men in the World' in Booth's story (III. 5). From then onwards, James shifts his character at every appearance, playing 'the Part of a Friend' (IV. 6, p. 178) and of an enemy alternately. On every occasion, James's change from friend to enemy or vice versa is 'mysterious' to Booth: 'Indeed the whole Behaviour of *James*, so different from what it had been formerly, had something so mysterious in it, that it greatly puzzled and perplexed poor Booth' (IV. 8, p. 185). The truth is that James is void of any definite character, as Mrs. Bennet/Atkinson, herself another

unfixed character, succinctly implies in her caution to Amelia against James's evil design.

'I cannot but believe your Apprehensions to be sincere,' replied *Amelia*, 'and I must think myself obliged to you for them; but I am convinced you are entirely in an Error. I look on Colonel *James* as the most generous and best of Men. He was a Friend, and an excellent Friend too, to my Husband, long before I was acquainted with him, and he hath done him a thousand good Offices. What do you say of his Behaviour Yesterday?'

'I wish,' cries Mrs. *Atkinson*, 'that his Behaviour To-day had been equal.'
(VIII. 9, pp. 344-45)

Mrs. James is the most excellent actress of all, so far as the character of a 'fine Lady' is concerned. Hers is a most radical metamorphosis from good old Miss Bath at Montpelier (III. 8-9) to a 'fine Lady' of hardest access (IV. 6). Though 'her present Demeanour may seem unnatural and inconsistent with her former Character', it is explained, the 'great Alteration in her Circumstances, from a State of Dependency on a Brother, who was himself no better than a Soldier of Fortune, to that of being Wife to a Man of a very large Estate, and considerable Rank in Life' is enough to make 'a fine Lady' of Miss Bath (IV. 6, p. 181). Acting a 'fine Lady' is all about 'Form and Show', and Mrs. James gives her finest 'Show' when her brother Captain Bath (mis)informs her of the suspected duel between James and Booth.

Neither Miss *Bellamy*, nor Mrs. *Cibber* were ever in a greater Consternation on the Stage, than now appeared in the Countenance of Mrs. *James*. 'Good Heavens! Brother,' cries she, 'what do you tell me! you have frightened me to Death.—Let your Man get me a Glass of Water immediately, if you have not a Mind to see me die before your Face. When, where, how was this Quarrel, why did you not prevent it, if you knew of it? Is it not enough to be every Day tormenting me with hazarding your own Life, but must you bring the Life of one who you know must be and ought to be so much the dearest of all to me, into Danger? Take your sword, Brother, take your Sword, and plunge it into my Bosom; it would be kinder of you than to fill it with such Dreads and Terrours.'—Here she swallowed the Glass of Water; and then threw herself back in her Chair, as if she had intended to faint away. (V. 8, pp. 222-23)

Like her husband, Mrs. James changes her character so frequently that it is doubtful whether she possesses any 'real Character', as is ironically implied in the following:

Mrs. James now behaved herself so very unlike the Person that she lately appeared, that it might have surprised any one who doth not know, that besides that of a fine Lady, which is all mere Art and Mummery, every such Woman hath some real Character at the Bottom, in which, whenever Nature gets the better of her, she acts. Thus the finest Ladies in the World will sometimes love, and sometimes scratch, according to their different natural Dispositions, with great Fury and Violence, tho' both of these are equally inconsistent with a fine Lady's artificial Character. (VIII. 9, p. 343)

Mrs. James is so accustomed to 'Art and Mummery' that even the 'some real Character' has to be 'acted' and therefore proves no less 'artificial' than her 'artificial Character'. Providing that she used to have 'some real Character' as Miss Bath in the past, it is now estranged from Mrs. James. Thus Mrs. James, as well as her husband, is void of any 'real Character'. It seems pertinent that she is known by two different names, that is, Miss Bath and Mrs. James, as if they were different persons.⁷ In fact, not only Mrs. James but Miss Mathews and Mrs. Bennet, too, change their names in the course of the story: the one known as 'Vincent' in the prison (I. 4) and the other becoming Mrs. Atkinson by her second marriage. The 'noble Lord' remains nameless, ironically because he assumes a different 'false Name' whenever he is out for a new paramour, as we shall note shortly. To go back to Mrs. James's 'some real Character', it is not unlikely that she is at the moment playing nice to Amelia, with a view to obliging her to accept James's invitation. This suspicion is confirmed in the 'very polite Scene' between Mr. and Mrs. James (XI. 1), a sparkling set-piece in the same spirit as the 'matrimonial Dialogue' between Mr. and Mrs. Wild (*Jonathan Wild*, III. 8). The wife is promised more allowances on condition that she persuade Amelia to comply with the husband's invitation, with her eyes open to his intention. An exchange of empty courtesies follows: 'She thanked him with a low Curtesie; and

⁷ Though by slip of memory, Fielding has Amelia refer to Mrs. James's maiden name as 'Jenny Bath' (V. 4) and James address her as 'Molly' later (XI. 1).

he was in such good Humour that he offered to kiss her. To this Kiss she coldly turn'd her Cheek' (p. 456). The couple play their 'artificial' characters to the full. On the arrival of company at the end of the scene, 'both Husband and Wife put on their best Looks to receive their Guests; and from their Behaviour to each other during the rest of the Day, a Stranger might have concluded he had been in Company with the fondest Couple in the Universe' (p. 456).

Mrs. Ellison is another accomplished actress who always plays the part of a friend to the Booths. Her performance is always so artful that Mrs. Bennet recalls she was not only kept in the dark as to Mrs. Ellison's true character as bawd, even after being seduced by the 'noble Lord', but deceived into believing her to be a benefactor.

'No sooner,' said Mrs. *Bennet*, continuing her Story, 'was my Lord departed, than Mrs. *Ellison* came to me. She behaved in such a Manner, when she became acquainted with what had past, that tho' I was at first satisfied of her Guilt, she began to stagger my Opinion; and, at length, prevailed upon me entirely to acquit her. She raved like a Madwoman against my Lord, swore he should not stay a Moment in her House, and that she would never speak to him more. In short, had she been the most innocent Woman in the World, she could not have spoke, nor acted any otherwise; nor could she have vented more Wrath and Indignation against the Betrayer. (VII. 8, p. 297)

The most consummate actor of all in *Amelia* is Ellison's master, the 'Noble Lord' himself. Though usually the more discreet of the Booths, Amelia remains so totally blind, so far as this rapist aristocrat is concerned, that she keeps commending him as 'so good-natured and so generous' (IV. 1). His (feigned) fondness for children in particular convinces Amelia that 'he is One of the best of Men'. Mrs. Bennet recalls his behaviour thus:

But if I was silly in being deceived, how wicked was the Wretch who deceived me; who used such Art, and employed such Pains, such incredible Pains to deceive me! He acted the Part of a Nurse to my little Infant; he danced it, he lulled it, he kissed it; declared it was the very Picture of a Nephew of his, his favourite Sister's Child; and said so many kind and fond Things of its Beauty, that I myself, tho', I believe, one of the tenderest and fondest of Mothers, scarce carried my own Ideas of my little Darling's Perfection, beyond the Compliments which he paid it. (VII. 6, p. 290)

Amelia first meets the lord at an oratorio, where on her arrival with Mrs. Ellison he approaches the unsuspecting Amelia in the character of a well-bred, engaging gentleman.

Tho' our Ladies arrived full two Hours before they saw the Back of Mr. *Handel*; yet this time of expectation did not hang extremely heavy on their Hands; for besides their own Chat, they had the Company of the Gentleman, whom they found at their first Arrival in the Galery; and who, though plainly, or rather roughly dressed, very luckily for the Women happened to be not only well-bred, but a Person of very lively Conversation. The Gentleman on his part seemed highly charmed with *Amelia*, and in fact was so: for, though he restrained himself entirely within the Rules of Good-Breeding, yet was he in the highest Degree officious to catch at every Opportunity of shewing his Respect, and doing her little Services. He procured her a Book and Wax-Candle, and held the Candle for her himself during the whole Entertainment.
(IV. 9, p. 189)

As revealed in both Mrs. Bennet's and Mr. Trent's story (XI. 3), it is the usual manner of the noble Lord to assume 'a false Name, and some Disguise of his Person' whenever he pursues a new victim (p. 469). Nevertheless, he remains unnamed throughout, which, as most critics agree, enhances his sinisterness.⁸ As mentioned earlier, the noble Lord has so many names that ironically he remains nameless.

Another significant feature of the noble Lord, though seldom recognised, is that he rarely, if ever, speaks in his own voice, his words and conduct being mostly described by others. His conversation, it is repeatedly said, is 'so general, so lively, and so obliging', but few specimens are given direct from his mouth. This inauspicious taciturnity adds to our anxiety about his fundamental inscrutability. He is the one 'behind the scenes', who, with Mrs. Ellison as his 'Underactor', controls the 'long, regular, premeditated' designs involving Mrs. Bennet, Mrs. Trent, Amelia, and many unknown victims. In his sinisterly nameless and voiceless ubiquity, the lord perhaps recalls the Corsican politician, 'that little gentleman, yonder in the chair, who says nothing, knows it all', in *The Historical Register*. This enigmatic lord is the very emblem of the fundamental impenetrability of London, his anonymity epitomising the

⁸ See for instance Braudy, p. 193, and Robert Alter, *Fielding and the Nature of the Novel* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 152–53.

global masquerade daily enacted in the metropolis, where money commands service and purchases the character of a gentleman, a fine lady, or whatever. Whoever pays enough turns his lordship or her ladyship, as in the eyes or indeed on the lips of a 'Master of a Public Ordinary' or a 'Hackney Coachman'. In the masquerade scene, one masquerader asks of another: 'What is his Character?' (X. 2, p. 412). Though the same question echoes time and time again throughout *Amelia*, it is a question that cannot be answered, not even by Dr. Harrison. Thus the Author's *éclaircissement* as to Dr. Harrison's ignorance of the character of Murphy succinctly addresses the quintessential inscrutability of the huge public house called London.

It will appear therefore, I apprehend, no longer strange, that the Doctor who had seen this Man but three Times since his Removal to Town, and then conversed with him only on Business, should remain as ignorant of his Life and Character, as a Man generally is of the Character of the Hackney Coachman who drives him. Nor doth it reflect more on the Honour or Understanding of the Doctor under these Circumstances to employ *Murphy*, than it would if he had been driven about the Town by a Thief or a Murderer.
(XII. 5, p. 515)

2. 'I must not exceed my Ability, which is not very great'

What is Booth's 'Character', then? 'A young Fellow' is brought from nowhere before Thrasher's bar with 'several Delinquents', no ancestry, no parentage given, but his 'Name' Booth. The hero of *Amelia* appears critically uncharacterised, and his want of a definite character, however different he is from the 'artificial' characters discussed in the foregoing section, may potentially equate him with them. Our concern for his uncertain character increases in the following scenes in the prison, where Booth helplessly submits himself to other prisoners and the governor or master of the prison. On entrance, Booth is asked for the 'Garnish', and, unable to pay, he has his coat 'not only stript off, but out of Sight in a Minute' (p. 27). He is 'too weak to resist, and too wise to complain of this Usage', his wisdom or 'Philosophy' being that every man acts merely from 'the Impulse of Passion', so that virtue or vice has no meaning in itself (I. 3, p. 32). Later Booth lectures on this to the unbelieving Amelia:

all Men, as well the best as the worst, act alike from the Principle of Self-Love. Where Benevolence therefore is the uppermost Passion, Self-Love directs you to gratify it by doing good, and by relieving the Distresses of others; for they are then in Reality your own. But where Ambition, Avarice, Pride, or any other Passion governs the Man, and keeps his Benevolence down, the Miseries of all other Men affect him no more than they would a Stock or a Stone. And thus the Man and his Statue have often the same Degree of Feeling or Compassion. (X. 9, p. 451)

To Booth, 'Benevolence' signifies nothing other than a gratification, directed by 'Self-Love', of the 'uppermost Passion' of the moment, which may change to anything at the next. Such 'Philosophy' betrays Booth's 'moral inertia' in parallel with his physical helplessness.⁹ Moreover, as Braudy rightly points out, Booth's philosophy is 'as much an equivocation as are the beliefs of more venal characters' (p. 185). For example, Booth's philosophy of 'Self-Love' apparently resembles the unsavoury doctrine of 'Self-Love' embodied in Justice Thrasher (I. 2, p. 21), and his determinism by the 'Impulse of Passion' is just as 'impersonal' (Braudy, p. 185) as Robinson's by the 'Impulse of Fate' (I. 3, p. 32).

Likewise, the stories exchanged between Booth and Miss Mathews in the first three books of *Amelia* parallel each other to a disconcerting extent, though it is implied that Booth is an 'honest Man', unlike Miss Mathews, the accomplished actress or 'Hypocrite'. Both stories take the same form: courtship of a soldier to a gentlewoman, parental disapproval, elopement and its aftermath.¹⁰ It is no coincidence, I suppose, that even the military ranks of the two men are closely matched: a cornet (Hebbers) and an ensign (Booth). Besides, both men approach their mistresses in virtually the same manner:

one Day, when *Hebbers* was alone with me, he took an Opportunity of expressing his Abhorrence at the Thoughts of marrying for Interest, contrary to his Inclinations. I was warm on the Subject, and I believe, went so far as to say, *That none but Fools and Villains did so*. He replied, with a Sigh, 'Yes, Madam, but what would you think of a Man whose Heart is all the while

⁹ D. S. Thomas, 'Fortune and the Passions in Fielding's *Amelia*', *MLR*, 60 (1965), 176-87 (p. 177).

¹⁰ For full details see Rothstein, pp. 172-73.

bleeding for another Woman, to whom he would willingly sacrifice the World; but, because he must sacrifice her Interest as well as his own, never durst even give her a Hint of that Passion which was preying on his very Vitals? Do you believe, Miss Fanny, there is such a Wretch on Earth? (I. 8, pp. 51–52)

After several Visits, in which Looks and Sighs had been interchanged on both Sides, but without the least Mention of Passion in private, one Day the Discourse between us, when alone, happened to turn on Love; I say happened, for I protest it was not designed on my Side, and I am as firmly convinced not on hers. I was now no longer Master of myself; I declared myself the most wretched of all Martyrs to this tender Passion; that I had long concealed it from its Object. At length, after mentioning many Particulars, suppressing, however, those which must have necessarily brought it home to *Amelia*, I concluded with begging her to be the Confidante of my Amour, and to give me her Advice on that Occasion. (II. 1, p. 69)

Both Hebbers and Booth insinuate themselves into their mistresses's favour, by depicting themselves as most 'wretched' martyrs of love, who suppress their passion for the 'Interest' of the beloved, and then pretend unconvincingly to ask merely for their womanly advice. Obviously Booth is to be distinguished from Hebbers, who is just acting that part, but Booth's diction and emotional ebullition turn out no less or perhaps more theatrical, if more romantic, than Hebbers', in the hyperbolic manner of heroic or pathetic tragedy.

Too true is it, I am afraid, my dearest Creature, that the highest human Happiness is imperfect. How rich would be my Cup, was it not for one poisonous Drop, which imbitters the whole! O *Amelia*, what must be the Consequence of my ever having the Honour to call you mine!—You know my Situation in Life, and you know your own: I have nothing more than the poor Provision of an Ensign's Commission to depend on; your sole Dependance is on your Mother; should any Act of Disobedience defeat your Expectations, how wretched must your Lot be with Me! O *Amelia*, how ghastly an Object to my Mind is the Apprehension of your Distress! Can I bear to reflect a Moment on the Certainty of your foregoing all the Conveniencies of Life; on the Possibility of your suffering all its most dreadful Inconveniencies! [...] But, O my sweet Creature, carry your Thoughts a little farther. Think of the tenderest Consequences, the dearest Pledges of our Love. Can I bear to think of entailing Beggary on the Posterity of my *Amelia*? On *our*—O Heavens! on *our* Children?—On the other side, is it possible even to mention the Word—I will not, must not, cannot, part with you.—What must we do, *Amelia*? it is now I sincerely ask your Advice. (II. 3, p. 74)

The self-indulgent manner of Booth's narration of his own love story inevitably renders him as affected as the narrator of the other story, Miss Mathews, as well as his

counterpart Hebberts in that story. He is too prone to 'emotional seduction' to withstand the ensuing 'sexual seduction' by Miss Mathews (Rothstein, p. 173). He is indeed 'too weak to resist'.

As regards Booth's weakness, K. G. Hall claims that 'at its simplest *Amelia* is [...] "the story of a weak man and a strong woman"'.¹¹ Speaking of *Amelia*, however, Cynthia Griffin Wolff sounds more to the point: 'Fielding emphasizes her passivity in a variety of ways. The epithet "poor Amelia" is used so frequently that it ceases to have more than a nominal significance. Other terms, such as "poor little lamb" or "child" again insist upon her helplessness'.¹² In truth, weakness or helplessness is not exclusive to the hero but marked in every 'good' character in the novel. After all, the 'helplessness of the individual in the face of corrupt institutions', as Scheuermann puts it, is the subject of *Amelia* (p. 25). Rawson claims that 'none of the good protagonists' in *Amelia* display the 'intrinsic energy of their counterparts in the earlier fiction': 'Amelia is more passive than Sophia, Dr. Harrison is infinitely duller than Parson Adams and slightly duller even than Allworthy, Atkinson is unrelieved by the energizing comicality of Joseph, and Booth, an older Tom Jones, is also, as Martin Price says, "shabbier", lacking most of Tom's romantic appeal' (Rawson, pp. 70–71). What Rawson says is truest of Booth, who surely lacks the active energy of the earlier heroes, whereas it is rather a matter of 'more' or 'less' with regard to other characters. Even so, Wolff is right in perceiving that all Fielding's 'good' characters, heroes like Joseph and Tom included, are marked by their 'striking [...] lack of force, their inability ever to accomplish much more than learning to survive in the world as it is' (Wolff, p. 38). What distinguishes the earlier heroes, regardless of their limited achievement, is their spontaneous or even Drawcansirian resistance against the inhibiting world around them, whereas the half-pay officer in the last novel has given up. The fighting has to be done by Atkinson and Dr. Harrison.

¹¹ K. G. Hall, *The Exalted Heroine and the Triumph of Order: Class, Women and Religion in the English Novel, 1740-1800* (Lanham: Barnes and Noble Books, 1993), p. 62.

¹² Cynthia Griffin Wolff, 'Fielding's *Amelia*: Private Virtue and Public Good', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 10 (1968), 37-55 (p. 42).

Booth's 'inertia' is physical as well as moral, so that he is seldom, if ever, seen in action throughout the novel. Even in his recollections of the campaign at Gibraltar, emphasis is ironically less on how he fought than on how he got injured and rescued by his servant Atkinson.

About a Week after my Arrival, it was my Fortune to be ordered on a Sally-Party, in which my left Leg was broke with a Musket Ball; and I should most certainly have perish'd miserably, or must have owed my Preservation to some of the Enemy, had not my faithful Servant carried me off on his Shoulders, and afterwards, with the Assistance of one of his Comrades, brought me back into the Garrison. (III. 5, pp. 113-14)

I was now once more able to perform my Duty; when (so unkind was the Fortune of War) the second Time I mounted the Guard, I received a violent Contusion from the bursting of a Bomb. I was felled to the Ground, where I lay breathless by the Blow, till honest *Atkinson* came to my Assistance, and conveyed me to my Room, where a Surgeon immediately attended me. (pp. 115-16)

On both occasions, Booth owes 'his Preservation' to Atkinson's timely succour. Atkinson disappears unnoticed from the story, to re-encounter the Booths in the park in the capacity of a 'Serjeant upon Duty' (IV. 7). The faithful Atkinson, whose brawny shoulders used to carry off his wounded master at Gibraltar, comes upon the scene to help out little Billy from the bullying hands of a 'Foot-Soldier'. Though Booth displays unusual agility in this emergency, the episode seems to me more important as an apt testimony to the part this 'Serjeant upon Duty' plays for the Booths. Atkinson literally keeps vigil for the Booths, unknown to them until Mrs. Ellison, on seeing him pass by the window, asks Booth: 'who is that genteel young Serjeant? He was here every Day last Week, to enquire after you' (V. 2, p. 198). It is Atkinson, too, who 'informs' Booth of Murphy's design to get a warrant against him, having by pure chance overheard him at an alehouse the night before (IV. 9). As well as being on voluntary watch for the Booths, he even contrives a stratagem of his own to spy out Murphy's plan under the disguise of one of Booth's creditors. To this information, Atkinson adds:

I wish [...] I could do your Honour any Service. Shall I walk about all Day before the Door? or shall I be Porter and watch it in the Inside, till your Honour can find some means of securing yourself? I hope you will not be offended at me, but I beg you would take care of falling into *Murphy's* Hands; for he hath the Character of the greatest Villain upon Earth. I am afraid you will think me too bold, Sir; but I have a little Money, if it can be of any Service, do, pray your Honour, command it. It can never do me so much Good any other way. Consider, Sir, I owe all I have to yourself, and my dear Mistress. (V. 4, p. 206)

As he earlier assured Booth, Atkinson is qualified to stand bail for him when necessary, for he is 'a Housekeeper' and 'worth £100' at the least (IV. 9, p. 191). This is something that Fielding rarely achieved in his own precarious career, even as late as in 1748, when he found himself unqualified for Middlesex magistracy because of his inability to meet the property requirement of £100 a year (Battestin, *Life*, p. 448–50). Atkinson's real 'Merit', however, is inestimable, for he is blessed with natural 'Modesty' denoting his 'noble' character 'notwithstanding the Meanness of his Birth' (IV. 7, p. 182). As both Mrs. Ellison and Mrs. Bennet affirm, Atkinson is naturally 'genteel' and much more so than all 'the finest gentlemen of the world' (V. 3, p. 203). In this regard, Atkinson closely resembles Joseph, as well as in his masculine beauty plus the charming clumsiness that makes another Slipslop of Mrs. Ellison:

He was handsome and exquisitely well made; and yet, as he had never learnt to dance, he made so awkward an Appearance in Mrs. *Ellison's* Parlour, that the good Lady herself, who had invited him in, could at first scarce refrain from Laughter at his Behaviour.

He had not however been long in the Room, before Admiration of his Person got the better of such risible Ideas. So great is the Advantage of Beauty in Men as well as Women, and so sure is this Quality in either Sex of procuring some Regard from the Beholder. (V. 2, pp. 199–200).

By coincidence or no, Atkinson used to be known as 'Joe' to Amelia, who testifies to Atkinson's 'Goodness' with 'a Story or two' of his childhood. In Amelia's recollections, young Joe definitely looks like young Tom Jones:

When he was but six Years old, he was at Play with me at my Mother's House, and a great Pointing-dog bit him through the Leg. The poor Lad in the Midst of the Anguish of his Wound, declared he was overjoyed it had not

happened to Miss, (for the same Dog had just before snapt at me, and my Petticoats had been my Defence.) Another Instance of his Goodness which greatly recommended him to my Father, and which I have loved him for ever since, was this: My Father was a great Lover of Birds, and strictly forbad the spoiling of their Nests. Poor *Joe* was one Day caught upon a Tree, and being concluded guilty, was severely lashed for it; but it was afterwards discovered that another Boy, a Friend of *Joe's*, had robbed the Nest of its young ones, and poor *Joe* had climbed the Tree in order to restore them, notwithstanding which he submitted to the Punishment rather than he would impeach his Companion.
(V. 3, p. 201)

Rawson does less than justice to Atkinson in saying that he is 'unrelieved by the energizing comicality of Joseph'. Given more chances to come on the centre stage, 'Joe' Atkinson would have proved himself worthy of the comparison. What really matters is that in Atkinson are lodged the very charms missing in Booth in comparison with Joseph and Tom: Joseph's natural vigour and sportiness, even his 'Shoulders [...] broad and brawny', Tom's spontaneous and 'romantic appeal', and so forth. It is not simply Booth's lack of such attractions that damages his characterisation. It is certainly not in his favour that Booth is said to know 'not half [Atkinson's] Merit'. The at once Herculean and Drawcansirian heroism attached to the earlier heroes is marginalised into Atkinson in *Amelia*, which marks a concession to the fact that such a quality is not viable in reality any more than it is capable of creating anybody but the modestly prosperous servant-turned sergeant with no secret parentage to recover.

Atkinson's vigilance notwithstanding, Booth is arrested and removed from one prison (that is, his lodgings) to another (that is, Bondum the bailiff's house), and the suer turns out to be none other than Dr. Harrison! Dr. Harrison's return in this role is not only unforeseen but seemingly contradictory to the good old doctor recollected in Booth's story. In Booth's story, too, Dr. Harrison's first entry is as abrupt as his just-mentioned return or Booth's initial appearance before Thrasher. Harrison catches up the unfortunate lover in anguish over whether or rather how to run away with Amelia.

With such Thoughts I had tormented myself for near two Hours, till most of the Company had taken their Leave. This I was myself incapable of doing; nor do I know when I should have put an End to my Visit, had not Dr. *Harrison*

taken me away almost by Force, telling me in a Whisper, that he had something to say to me of great Consequence.—You know the Doctor, Madam— (II. 3, p. 77)

Given the rarely questioned view of Dr. Harrison as a mentor better but ‘infinitely’ or ‘slightly duller’ than Adams or Allworthy,¹³ his is a singularly dramatic introduction, from which alone it is difficult to judge whether he is a friend or an enemy to Booth. Miss Mathews describes her old acquaintance as ‘one of the best Men in the World’, but given her character, her comment is likely to do more harm than good to the as yet uncertain character. Booth concludes the chapter with the invitation that ‘you will judge [...] by the Sequel, whether I have reason to think him so’.

As Booth proceeds with his story, Dr. Harrison appears curiously oscillating between the character of a friend and that of an enemy, just as James is to do later in the novel. In the next scene to the above, Dr. Harrison at first appears no friend to Booth, for he plainly tells him that he advised Mrs. Harris, Amelia’s mother, to send away Amelia out of Booth’s reach. He then confesses to Booth that he did so, because he judged, with ‘no good Character’ told of Booth, that he was laying a ‘Design of stealing a human Creature for the Sake of her Fortune’ (II. 4, pp. 77–78). Dr. Harrison adds, however, that on learning Booth’s innocence from what Mrs. Harris overheard before swooping on the lovers’ secret meeting the night before, he became Booth’s ‘Friend and zealous Advocate’ and prevailed on Mrs. Harris to consent to their marriage on condition of settling Amelia’s marriage portion. Harrison returns no friend in the story proper (VIII. 10), for, as already mentioned, it comes to light that he was the mysterious suer who employed Murphy to prosecute Booth. The cause of ‘such extraordinary Friendship’ as Booth terms it (p. 354) is revealed in the following chapter, where an account is given of ‘some horrid Slander and bitter Invective’ against Booth delivered to Harrison abroad and back in his parish. More

¹³ See Rawson, p. 70, Irma Z. Sherwood, ‘The Novelists as Commentators’, in *The Age of Johnson: Essays Presented to Chauncey Brewster Tinker* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949), pp. 113–25 (p. 118), and Anthony J. Hassal, ‘Fielding’s *Amelia*: Dramatic and Authorial Narration’, *Novel*, 5 (1972), 225–33 (p. 231).

surprisingly, the supposedly mad burglar in Book VI, Chapter 4, whose identity and motive have since remained unknown, turns out to have been none other than the doctor himself. He had meant to see Booth in person before passing judgement on him. Yet the doctor only came across the precious presents from the 'noble Lord' at Booth's lodgings, and taking them as 'ocular' evidence against him, proceeded to prosecute him.

All misunderstandings cleared up, Dr. Harrison turns friend once and for all and grows busy doing muscular as well as 'mental Exercise' to preserve the Booths in the menacing metropolis (X. 4). As pointed out earlier, Atkinson plays the role of a vigilant watchman and informer for the Booths, but his role sharply decreases since Harrison's return, which suggests that now the doctor is in charge of the same post. The transference of the role is attested by the accident at Vauxhall (IX. 9), which clearly parallels the earlier episode at St. James's Park (IV. 7). Atkinson rushed on to the earlier scene to help rescue little Billy, whereas in the episode at Vauxhall Dr. Harrison has to protect Amelia from two 'young Sparks'. Yet all he can do is to exhort to their deaf ears, only to be rudely flouted. The Booths narrowly escape a calamity, not because of Harrison's exhortations but only because the hooligans happen to be acquaintances of Captain Trent who arrives upon the scene barely in time. The episode underlines Harrison's limited ability to safeguard the Booths in the hazardous world. The doctor himself confesses to Amelia his awareness of this, when she asks for help to save Booth from his impending transfer to Newgate from the bailiff's: 'You know I would go to the utmost Prudence to serve you; but I must not exceed my Ability, which is not very great' (XII. 3, p. 502). Harrison's 'not very great' ability disables him from giving succour to the Booths without distressing his own circumstances.

The nature of Harrison's limited ability is best dramatised in the last couple of chapters, where he employs his 'Ability' to its utmost limit, to see that the final justice is done and the Booths are restored to their rightful status and possessions. Robinson, on his supposed deathbed, confesses to Dr. Harrison that Murphy

committed forgery for Betty Harris, Amelia's sister, to usurp her of her right to the Harris estate. This throws Dr. Harrison into a great confusion.

Something must be done for Fear of Accidents—I will send to Counsel immediately, to know how to secure your Testimony.—Whom can I get to send?—Stay, ay—he will do—but I know not where his House or his Chambers are—I will go myself—but I may be wanted here. (XII. 6, p. 517)

'Accidents', Harrison rightly apprehends, can happen anywhere, at any moment. Evil is ubiquitous, whereas one good man cannot be everywhere at once. At a loss as he is, Harrison exerts himself to the utmost limit of his ability, and Bender sums up his activities in the final chapters thus:

In the flurry of action that concludes the novel, Harrison literally leads the hue and cry after lawyer Murphy at full sprint, crying "Stop the villain! stop the thief!" [...] Being in foot the nimbler of the two, he soon overtook him' [XII. 6, pp. 518–19]. He takes the role of arresting constable over the protests of the mob, which demands an official with a warrant. Meanwhile, because of Murphy's behaviour during the inquiry by an honest justice of the peace who knows the law, Harrison realizes that 'if his house was searched some lights and evidence relating to this affair would certainly be found' [XII. 7, pp. 522]. After successfully demanding a search warrant, he himself conducts the investigation like a Bow Street Runner at work for Justice Fielding: "And I will go and see it executed," cries the doctor; for it was a maxim of his that no man could descend below himself in doing any act which may contribute to protect an innocent person or to bring a rogue to the gallows' [p. 523].
(p. 191)

Bender argues that 'Dr. Harrison plays a startling number of authoritative roles in *Amelia* [...] like a Bow Street Runner at work for Justice Fielding'. His comparison is appropriate in that it rightly grasps the active, 'running' nature of Harrison's morality, distinguished from sedentary moralising. Nevertheless, the attribute 'authoritative' is misleading and reveals Bender's utilitarian notion of 'authority'.¹⁴ Far from being 'authoritative', the flurry of actions Bender records emphatically underline Harrison's

¹⁴ As regards Fielding's notion of 'authority', I would agree with Hugh Amory that Fielding 'does not conceive his "authority" in a mercantilist way, as grounded in utilitarian principles, but in a neo-classical way, as a question of right and precedent': 'Magistrate or Censor?: The Problem of Authority in Fielding's Later Writings', *SEL*, 12 (1972), 503–18 (p. 504).

want of 'authority', which frustrates his moral campaign to 'protect an innocent Person or to bring a Rogue to the Gallows'.

For his moral 'campaign', Harrison deserves the title of 'a good Soldier-like Christian' (p. 360), a title which none of the 'captains', including Captain Booth, seem to live up to in *Amelia*. Harrison explicitly puts the association in a conversation with Captain Bath.

If Honour and Fighting are, as they seem to be, synonymous Words with you, I believe there are some Clergymen, who, in Defence of their Religion, or their Country, or their Friend, the only justifiable Causes of fighting, except bare Self-defence, would fight as bravely as yourself, Colonel; and that without being paid for it. (IX. 3, pp. 364–65)

It is implied that Harrison's 'Fighting', like Booth's, is not likely to be appreciated, still less 'paid'. Still this Drawcansirian clergyman refuses to surrender, which keeps his moral energy active, thus distinct from Captain Booth's mental inertia. In this regard, Dr. Harrison at once mirrors and contrasts with the good but weary magistrate at the end of the novel, whose 'Justice Business' has not a few bearings on 'author business' as unrecognised moral warfare.

3. Justice Business, Author Business

The Justice of the Peace before whom Betty, Amelia's maid-servant, is carried for stealing two shifts from her mistress happens 'by great Accident' to be well read in the law (XI. 7). His very knowledge of the law, however, thwarts his judicature. He cannot convict Betty of felony, for her theft of Amelia's shifts, worth far less than forty shillings, does not constitute a crime: 'a Breach of Trust is no Crime in our Law, unless it be in a Servant; and then the Act of Parliament requires the Goods taken to be of the Value of forty Shillings' (p. 485). Though he agrees with Booth that 'sure this is a very extraordinary Law', the Justice wearily adds that 'it belongs not to my Office to make or mend Laws. My Business is only to execute them'. The

pawnbroker automatically escapes punishment for 'receiving stolen Goods', because 'if the Goods are not stolen, he cannot be guilty of receiving them, knowing them to be stolen'. The Justice deplores thus:

besides, as to his Offence, to say the Truth, I am almost weary of prosecuting it; for such are the Difficulties laid in the Way of this Prosecution, that it is almost impossible to convict any one on it. And to speak my Opinion plainly, such are the Laws, and such the Method of Proceeding, that one would almost think our Laws were rather made for the Protection of Rogues, than for the Punishment of them. (p. 485)

'Weary' is the fittest word to depict the abiding frustration in 'Justice Business', which is constrained within the existing legal system, with no legislative power. The good and conscientious magistrate, whose 'Business is only to execute' the laws, absurd as they are, is in a way one of the captives of the system. A sketch of his daily 'Business' goes as follows:

They found the Magistrate just sitting down to his Dinner; however, when he was acquainted with the Doctor's Profession, he immediately admitted him, and heard his Business. Which he no sooner perfectly understood, with all its Circumstances, than he resolved, tho' it was then very late, and he had been fatigued all the Morning with public Business, to postpone all Refreshment till he had discharged his Duty. He accordingly adjourned the Prisoner and his Cause to the Bailiff's House, whither he himself with the Doctor immediately repaired, and whither the Attorney was followed by a much larger Number of Attendants than he had been honoured with before. (XII. 6, p. 521)

As well as being disabled by its marginal authority as explained above, the less ostentatious side of magistracy involves the 'sad drudgery' (Battestin, General Introduction, p. xxv) of a public man who has his private hours impinged upon by his 'Duty'. At least, it is believed, Justice Fielding's magistracy did (p. xxiii).

The difficulties leading to the prosecution of Murphy provide a crucial illustration of seriously disabled magistracy. The more urgent the situation becomes, the more scrupulous and less competent the Justice appears, instead of more powerful and authoritative. When Dr. Harrison asks him for a search warrant to secure evidences against Murphy, the Justice answers that he has 'no such Power', unless there is any

'Suspicion of stolen Goods' (p. 522). Robinson informs him that there must be some title deeds in Murphy's house, 'stolen from the right Owner', but

the Justice still hesitated. He said Title Deeds savoured of the Realty, and it was not Felony to steal them. If indeed they were taken away in a Box, then it would be Felony to steal the Box.

'Savour of the Realty! savour of the *Fartalty*,' said the Doctor, 'I never heard such incomprehensible Nonsense. This is impudent, as well as childish trifling with the Lives and Properties of Men.' (XII. 7, p. 523)

Though the Justice's overscrupulousness at this critical moment seems to deserve Dr. Harrison's impatient cry, 'Savour of the Realty! savour of *Fartalty*', the magistrate cannot help it, as long as he is obliged only to execute the existing laws. It is the 'outlaw' Robinson who manages to contrive an expedient to satisfy the requirement, thus playing a most crucial role in advancing the prosecution. Moreover, the Justice's powerless hesitation sharply contrasts with Murphy's 'great Confidence', in spite of Dr. Harrison declaration of 'sufficient Evidence of the Fact in his Possession', that 'I doubt not but to make appear to the Satisfaction of a Court of Justice' (p. 523) and 'the Law is all on my Side' (XII. 5, p. 513). Likewise, the present Justice's conscientious but debilitated magistracy seems overweighed by Justice Thrasher's, relentlessly competent and cheeky in coercing the law in his own interests. One good justice is overpowered and outnumbered by trading justices and cunning criminals, so that even the 'summary Way' of street justice, presided over by 'one of the Sturdiest and Forwardest of the Mob' with a 'superior Strength of Body, and of Lungs', seems all but justified in *Amelia*. Alongside this sturdier justice, Harrison's sanguine and unexhausted concern for justice ('I will go and see it executed') underlines what is lacking in the institutionalised or even paralysed judicature imposed on the good Justice.¹⁵

¹⁵ Amory gives an account of the 'paradox of impotent authority' remarked in Fielding's magisterial pamphlet, *An Enquiry into the Causes of the late Increase of Robbers* (pb. 19 January 1751), from which he argues that Fielding imagined a burlesque exit by conferring the 'censorial' or authorial '*auctoritas*' on the clergyman Dr. Harrison in *Amelia* (pp. 503–18).

The weary 'Justice Business' portrayed at the end of *Amelia* is justly a metaphor for 'author business' as weary and unauthoritative as the other. In this regard, the weary and powerless magistrate embodies Fielding's own awareness of the futility of his campaign not only as magistrate but as author, too. Indeed the same can be said of Captain Booth, a half-pay officer whose fighting for the country is not recognised any more than the fighting of 'a great and good Writer' for the 'Morals of his Countrymen' (*Familiar Letters*, Letter XL), which I have earlier referred to in connection with the soldier-author analogy in *The Champion*. It is no coincidence that both the magistrate and the half-pay officer are afflicted with similar inertia in coping with the menacing degeneracy of their milieu. The futility of one good author's moral campaign against overwhelming corruption is dramatically represented in the episode of Dr. Harrison's letter against adultery (X. 2). The letter, addressed to James to dissuade him from attempting on Amelia's virtue, happens to slip out of James's pocket at the masquerade and fall into the hands of several masquerading 'Bucks'. An audience gathers around the 'Bucks', one of whom, playing the 'Part of a public Orator', gives a performance of the letter with some 'Comments' in the following manner:

'Here beginneth the first Chapter of—Saint—Pox on't, *Jack*, what is the Saint's Name? I have forgot.'

'*Timothy*, you Blockhead,' answer'd another—'*Timothy*.'

'Well, then,' cries the Orator, 'of Saint *Timothy*.'

"Sir, I am very sorry to have any Occasion of writing on the following Subject, in a Country that is honoured with the Name of Christian [...].

"I need not tell you that Adultery is forbid in the Laws of the Decalogue, nor need I, I hope, mention, that it is as expresly forbid in the New Testament."

'*You see therefore*,' said the Orator, '*what the Law is, and therefore none of you will be able to plead Ignorance when you come to the Old-Baily in the Other World.—But here goes again.—* [...]

"And sure in a human Sense there is scarce any Guilt which deserves to be more severely punished. It includes in it almost every Injury and every Mischief which one Man can do to, or can bring on another. It is robbing him of his Property."

'*Mind that, Ladies*,' said the Orator, '*you are all the Property of your Husbands*; "[...] Domestic Happiness is the End of almost all our Pursuits, and the common Reward of all our Pains. When Men find themselves for ever barred from this delightful Fruition, they are lost to all Industry, and grow careless of all their worldly Affairs. [...] Despair and Madness very commonly ensue, and Murder and Suicide often close the Dreadful Scene."

'Thus, Gentlemen and Ladies, you see the Scene is closed. So here ends the first Act—and thus begins the second. [...]

"I can think of but one Argument more, and that indeed a very bad one: You throw away that Time in an impossible Attempt, which might, in other Places, crown your sinful Endeavours in Success."

'And so ends the dismal Ditty.'

'D—n me,' cries one, *'did ever mortal hear such d—nd Stuff?'* [...]

'Tom,' says one of them, *'let us set the Ditty to Musick; let us subscribe to have it set by Handel, it will make an excellent Oratorio.'*

'D—n me, Jack,' says another, *'we'll have it set to a Psalm Tune, and we'll sing it next Sunday at St. James's Church, and I'll bear a Bob, d—n me.'*
(pp. 413–16)

Harrison's letter, it can be plausibly argued, is a miniature recapitulation of the morals of *Amelia* itself and based on the same moral design as is professed in the dedication of the novel: 'The following Book is sincerely designed to promote the Cause of Virtue, and to expose some of the most glaring Evils, as well public as private, which at present infest the Country' (p. 3). However, the hostility not to mention incomprehension of its present audience, the likes of whom the author of the letter or the novel seeks to correct, turns the matter into ridicule and the author's moral design is completely lost. It is particularly interesting to note the essentially theatrical manner of the above scene, which duly ends with a 'damnation'. The setting is significant in this regard, too. As analysed earlier, the London of *Amelia* is in essence a huge public house, especially a play house, in which people put on masks and play different characters from their own. Thus the masquerade, at which the letter is read aloud and 'd—nd', is but the epitome of the global masquerade. Of this particular form of entertainment, Terry Castle says that it is the prototype of commercialised urban entertainments of eighteenth-century London, its ticket, a fetish of commodified pleasure, expediting 'an easily purchased entrée into a world of fashionable phantasmagoria'.¹⁶ Masquerade is distinguished from other theatrical forms in that masqueraders turn actors and actresses themselves, instead of mere spectators of on-stage performances. It is the ultimate materialisation of theatricality itself. By no coincidence, the damnation of Harrison's letter at the masquerade not

¹⁶ Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization: The Carnavalesque in Eighteenth-Century English Culture and Fiction* (London: Methuen, 1986), Ch. 1.

only stands for that of *Amelia*'s campaign against the masquerading morality of contemporary London, but reminds us of the earlier damnations of plays like *The Modern Husband* and *The Universal Gallant*, into which Fielding had intended to infuse 'serious social satire' similar to that of *Amelia*.

The authority of a satirist over the 'Morals of his Countrymen' is sustained by the author's belief in a real or imagined communication with the audience. As we have remarked so far, the hostility not to mention incomprehension of his audience was a constant vexation to Fielding throughout his career. First of all, he had had enough of damning audiences in the theatre, and then his editorship of *The Jacobite's Journal* fully exposed him to atrocious vilification. Even so, he had to suppress his own 'lurking hostility' to his audience, in so far as he was obliged to address it, whether to correct or to entertain. His anxious ambivalence in this regard can be measured from a passage like the following, in which the Author of *Tom Jones* ironically advises unsympathetic readers to quit reading 'Of Love' (VI. 1):

it would be wiser to pursue your Business, or your Pleasures (such as they are) than to throw away any more of your Time in reading what you can neither taste nor comprehend. To treat of the Effects of Love to you, must be as absurd as to discourse on Colours to a Man born blind. (p. 271)

In *Amelia*, too, where increased apprehensions about the hostile world permeate the descriptions of the metropolis and its inhabitants, numberless passages refer to the futility of addressing tender feelings to the unsympathetic. For example, the Author of *Amelia* remarks that 'to raise that Affection in the human Breast, which the Doctor had for *Amelia*, Nature is forced to use a kind of Logic, which is no more understood by a bad Man, than Sir *Isaac Newton*'s Doctrine of Colour is by one born blind' (X. 4, p. 422). In relating to Miss Mathews his parting from *Amelia*, Booth, too, says that 'no one is capable of tasting such a Scene, who hath not a Heart full of Tenderness, and perhaps not even then, unless he hath been in the same Situation' (III. 2, p. 106). While only a small number of good readers are capable of sympathising with the Author or the good characters, the majority of readers, it is implied, are callously

impassive and antipathetic not only to such tender feelings, which are in themselves a mark of natural goodness, but to the underlying design to 'promote the Cause of Virtue' embodied in the good characters. What is the point, then, of an author's striving for moral persuasion with such audience, when it is needless for the already virtuous and useless for the already vicious, as attested by the damnation of Harrison's letter?

The damnation at the masquerade does not stop Dr. Harrison from his Drawcansirian project or at least from his exertion to get justice for the Booths. The scenes showing his active participation in Murphy's prosecution are preceded by a record of Harrison's discourse with yet another 'Great Man' with 'very considerable Interests with the Ministers at that Time' (XI. 2), in which he unfolds his 'political' ethics in a testing situation. Harrison entreats the peer to help restore Booth to captaincy on full-pay, for which in return the 'Great Man' demands Harrison's 'Interest' in the election of the mayor of his town. An altercation follows between the doctor and the peer on the 'Corruption of Body Politic' of Britain, which in Harrison's view is so serious that 'nothing but Religion, which would have prevented this decrepid State of the Constitution, should prevent a Man of Spirit from hanging himself out of the Way of so wretched Contemplation' (p. 461). The Great Man comments that 'the Conduct of Politicians is not formed upon the Principles of Religion', mocking Harrison's principles of 'Honour and Honesty' as 'mere *Utopia*' (p. 459). He tests the doctor with a volley of questions:

do you really think, Doctor, [...] that any Minister could support himself in this Country upon such Principles as you recommend? Do you think he would be able to baffle an Opposition, unless he should oblige his Friends by conferring Places, often contrary to his own Inclinations, and his own Opinion? [...] And do you really believe, Doctor, [...] there ever was such a Minister, or ever will be? [...] Do you really believe any Man upon Earth was ever a Rogue out of Choice? [...] Do you imagine that if any Minister was really as good as you would have him, that the People in general would believe that he was so? (pp. 463–65)

To question after question, Dr. Harrison does reply in the affirmative, not because he is, like Parson Adams, happily ignorant of the dismal reality of corruption, but because he is determined not to 'despair' in its spite.

The Truth may be, that a Man of good Inclinations finds his Office filled with such Corruption by the Iniquity of his Predecessors, that he may despair of being capable of purging it; and so sits down contented, as *Augeas* did with the Filth of his Stables, not because he thought them the better, or that such Filth was really necessary to a Stable; but that he despaired of sufficient Force to cleanse them. (p. 465)

As Harrison implies, it takes the labour of a modern 'Hercules' to purify the Augean stables. But his overall emphasis on the ministry ironically suggests that it is largely up to them to attempt the Herculean task, which Harrison himself can only propose at best. Harrison's position in relation to the Great Man is quite similar to Fielding's in proposing or 'authoring' his reformist pamphlets for Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Hardwicke, whom the author of the *Enquiry into the late Causes of the late Increase of Robbers* (January 1751) addresses thus: 'I hope that I have no immodest opinion of my own abilities; but in truth, I have much less confidence in my authority'.¹⁷ In the novel, Harrison's proposals come to nothing, and his initial request on Booth's behalf, too, is rejected by the lord with the following words, accompanied by 'a leering Countenance', that 'I shall do him all the Service in my Power'. The doctor, well understanding the import, takes 'a civil, but not a very ceremonious Leave' in the end, to go and do what is in his limited power for the Booths. Like Harrison, Fielding contrives yet another Drawcansirian venture, *The Covent-Garden Journal*, his despairing view of the audience notwithstanding, to do what is in his limited power and go on with his author business as usual.

¹⁷ *An Inquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers and Related Writings*, ed. by Malvin R. Zirker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

4. Setting up Business: *The Covent-Garden Journal*

A comparison of the editorial introductions to the two major modern editions of *The Covent-Garden Journal* in 1915 and 1988 respectively, provides a good starting point in considering the background and nature of the journal, especially at its conception. Gerard Edward Jensen maintains, repeating Fielding's own words, that nothing but a 'whole-hearted desire to reform the manners and morals of the age, and to remedy the defects in the administering of justice to those whom the pernicious influences of the age had perverted' directed Fielding to plan the journal, 'at the highest point' of both his legal and literary career.¹⁸ Jensen does refer to Fielding's 'desire to add to his insufficient income, and to provide for his family's welfare' in anticipation of his death, but stresses that it 'certainly was not uppermost in Fielding's mind' (pp. 3–4). On the other hand, Bertrand Goldgar's introduction begins with the focal premiss that 'however much it eventually departed from its point of origin, the *Covent-Garden Journal* began as a vehicle for publicizing and advertising the Universal Register Office' which had opened on 19 February 1749/50:

In essence the Register Office was designed, said Fielding, 'to bring the World as it were together into one Place' by offering the combined service of an employment agency, a financial institution, a real estate agency, a curiosity shop, and a travel bureau.¹⁹

The Universal Register Office, owned and run by John and Henry Fielding, was as commercial a venture as any of its predecessors or contemporary rivals, the projectors of which 'like Fielding [...] couched their commercial proposals in terms of general

¹⁸ *The Covent-Garden Journal*, ed. by Gerard Edward Jensen, 2 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1915) Introduction, I, 2–3.

¹⁹ *The Covent-Garden Journal and A Plan of the Universal Register Office*, ed. by Bertrand A. Goldgar (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), General Introduction, pp. xv–xvi. Further references are to this edition and given in the text after quotations. Battestin endorses Goldgar's view but adds that 'very much "A Paper of Entertainment", the *Covent-Garden Journal* is nevertheless colored throughout by the graver moral purpose that characterizes all Fielding's writings of these last years' (*Life*, p. 543).

social welfare or relief of the poor' (p. xvi).²⁰ Of Fielding's primary motive, Goldgar says that it was 'of course [...] to make some much-needed money', which did not preclude him from associating the Register Office with 'a satisfying combination of profit and public service' (p. xx). The priority of motives in Goldgar's account is the reverse of that in Jensen's, and I agree with Goldgar. Years after the management of the Haymarket Theatre, Fielding literally became a master of a public house again, this time under the pseudonym of 'Alexander Drawcansir, Knight Censor of Great Britain', instead of the 'Great Mogul' or 'Pillage'.

The lucrative potential of the enterprise soon arrested the attention of one Philip D'Halluin, who opened the Public Register Office in mid-October 1752, the first of the rival offices to the Fieldings' (p. xxv). The ensuing flurry of an 'advertising war' between these competing agencies induced the proprietors of the Universal Register Office, including Fielding, to set up 'their own organ of publicity', and the first advertisement for the oncoming *Covent-Garden Journal* appeared in public towards the end of the same month, though it was not realised until 4 January 1752. Meanwhile, to meet the need for publicity Fielding inserted in *Amelia* a series of puffs for the 'Shop in the Strand' (violating the time scheme of the novel), which he would delete in the revised edition published in 1754 (p. xxviii).²¹ As expected, the rival D'Halluin responded to the opening of *The Covent-Garden Journal* by launching *Have At You All: or, The Drury-Lane Journal* under the editorship of Bonnel Thornton on 9 April. 'Thornton's paper', says Goldgar, 'was clearly aimed at the same market as Fielding's journal in an advertising war of the competing register offices' (p. xxviii). As Lance Bertelson rightly points out, Thornton's editorship of the journal is highly illustrative of the close collaboration between journalism and the 'world of business' at the times.

²⁰ Though without naming the office, Bender points out the striking resemblance between Fielding's and Wild's intelligence systems heavily relying on publicity and stressing the image of public service (pp. 170–74). According to Goldgar, at least six similar enterprises were recorded in France and England in the seventeenth century (pp. xvi–xvii).

²¹ See also Battestin, *Amelia*, General Introduction, pp. lix–lx. The deleted parts are reprinted in Appendix VI.

In undertaking *The Drury-Lane Journal*, Thornton launched himself into a literary marketplace with strong connections to the world of business. Dr. John Hill's 'Inspector' essays were intended primarily to enliven the commerce-oriented *London Daily Advertiser*. Fielding's *Covent-Garden Journal* specifically puffed the Universal Register Office operated by himself and his brother, Sir John Fielding. And [Christopher] Smart, at this stage, was using *The Midwife* primarily as a vehicle for advertising his Old Woman's Oratory, even to the extent of reprinting in it much of the material used in his performances. Thornton's *Drury-Lane Journal* followed this pattern, originating as an advertising instrument for the Public Register Office in King Street, Covent Garden.²²

This kind of journalism is a commercial venture through and through, and the nature of the paper war between *The Covent-Garden Journal* and its rivals can be rightly understood only in this context. Though it involved a contest of wit to some extent, the war, not simply a 'miniature "Battle of Books"',²³ was more properly a battle to sell more books.

The extent of Fielding's implication in that battle can be measured by the fact that he himself proclaimed the war against John Hill, the 'Inspector' in the *London Daily Advertiser*, as a commercial gambit 'to attract readers to his new venture' (p. xxxvi), that is, to promote the sales of his new paper in the already crowded and competitive market. The 'Inspector' divulged to the public, in less than a week from the provocation, that Fielding had in private proposed to him to impose on the public with shadow blows and share the lucre arising therefrom. The following is 'his Excellency' the Censor's reaction, 'with a Smile', to this betrayal of 'a secret Treaty' by 'his Lowness' the Inspector:

If the Betrayer of a private Treaty could ever deserve the least Credit, yet his Lowness here must proclaim himself either a Liar, or a Fool. None can doubt but that he is the former, if he hath feigned this Treaty, and I think few would scruple to call him the latter, if he had rejected it. The General then declared that the Fact stood thus: His Lowness, said he, came to my Tent on an Affair of his own. I treated him, though a Commander in the Enemy's Camp, with

²² Lance Bertelsen, *The Nonsense Club: Literature and Popular Culture 1749-1764* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 19.

²³ Wallace Cable Brown, 'A Belated Augustan: Bonnel Thornton, Esq.', *PQ*, 34 (1955), 335-48 (p. 336).

Civility, and even Kindness. I told him, with the utmost good Humour, I should attack his Lion;²⁴ and that he might, if he pleased, in the same Manner, defend him: from which, said I, no great Loss can happen to either Side.

(No. 3, p. 33)

Goldgar explains that Hill debased 'what had begun as a joke to improve the paper's circulation' into personal invective, which he adds 'may have aroused more interest than Fielding's original scheme would have done' (pp. xxxviii–xxxix). As the jocular war turned into a bitter personal brawl, Fielding quickly withdrew and declared the cease-fire in No. 4. Of this miscarried 'gambit' on Fielding's part in launching *The Covent-Garden Journal*, too, Jensen argues that it was the satirist's tactics 'to lure his readers into perusing what would have been distasteful to them in any other form' (p. 28). Considering Fielding's increased social concern apparent from the journal and other writings of this period, Jensen's view is not untrue in itself, but that he fails to realise Fielding's more than tactical engagement with the market and its resulting implications for our understanding of the journal.

The Covent-Garden Journal is commonly regarded as the most important and serious of all Fielding's journals. It is obviously the least political as well, which distinguishes it from its predecessors. Given Fielding's reserve towards partisan writing, that must have been a liberating factor in his last journal. On the other hand, *The Covent-Garden Journal* had to pay its way, unlike the government-subsidised *True Patriot* and *Jacobite's Journal*, in conducting which Fielding was relatively less concerned with marketing itself. His position in *The Champion* was significantly different from that. As mentioned earlier, Fielding was enlisted in the venture as a two-sixteenth share-holding editor, and opposition subsidies, if there were any, may have covered some modest part of its finances. Fielding's share in *The Covent-Garden Journal* must have been far greater than two-sixteenths, for, given its relation to the Universal Register Office, the journal was most certainly owned by Fielding and his brother, 'primarily if not exclusively' (General Introduction, p. xxix). It

²⁴ Hill had a wooden head of a lion set up as his receptacle of correspondence at the Bedford Coffee House (p. 26n).

follows that Fielding, virtually the sole 'author of most of the material in the journal' (p. xxx), took charge of its finances as well as its literary standards. To stress Fielding's peculiar position in his last journalistic undertaking is not to deny the authenticity of his claim to a serious moral warfare therein. In *The Covent-Garden Journal*, the commerce of authorship is accepted as a given in the 'Commonwealth of Literature', and Fielding becomes more analytic than before towards the state of the 'Commonwealth' that precludes authors from attaining an authoritative status.

5. Alexander, sirnamed Drawcansir

The inaugural essay of *The Covent-Garden Journal* opens in the conventional manner, that is, with a complaint about the multitude of authors: 'The World, it is certain, never more abounded with Authors, than at present' (p. 13). The complaint is particularly levelled at 'those Writers who deal forth their Lucubrations in small Parcels to the Public', so numerous that 'Homer's Simile of the Bees gives us scarce too vast an Idea of them' (p. 13). Similes like Homer's of bees, or of insects, maggots, and such like, are commonly used by contemporary writers to depict swarms of dunces in general. Not to mention the apocalyptic vision of maggots in *The Dunciad*, Johnson compares the unworthy author to 'an insect' in *The Rambler* (No. 93, 5 February 1751).²⁵ As appears from the above passage, journalists alias 'Sons of a Day' are particularly vulnerable to the 'insect' reputation, and another essay in *The Covent-Garden Journal* dwells upon 'those *Ephemeran* [*sic*] insect Authors, of whom every Day almost sees both the Birth and the Funeral' (No. 19, p. 129).²⁶ To be sure, Fielding was genuinely concerned, like most of his contemporaries, about the encroachment of unworthy authors, but it is also important to note that he was

²⁵ Samuel Johnson, *The Rambler*, ed. by W. J. Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss, The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), IV, 133.

²⁶ Linda Zionkowski contends that contemporary writers' 'surprise over the growing mass of texts', was 'less descriptive than polemical', when the book trade was 'actually in an economic slump', but she does not sufficiently evidence the 'economic slump': 'Territorial Disputes in the Republic of Letters: Canon Formation and the Literary Profession', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 31 (1990), 3–22 (pp. 3–4).

compelled to complain thus by the rationale of his present venture, as expounded above.

The conventional complaint is followed by a 'conventional puffery', a claim to superiority to the less worthy members of the periodical market, which is part of the 'common tactic in the paper wars', too (Goldgar, 'Fielding, Periodicals, and the Idea of Literary Fame', p. 5):

I believe it is usual in all such Crowds, to find some few Persons, at least, who have sufficient Decency to quit their Places and give Way to their Betters. I do not, therefore, in the least question, but that some of my cotemporary Authors will immediately, on my Appearance, have the Modesty to retire, and leave me sufficient Elbow Room in the World. Or, if they should not, the Public will, I make no doubt, so well understand themselves, as to give me proper Marks of their Distinction, and will make Room for me by turning others out.
(p. 14)

Phrases like 'I do not [...] in the least question' or 'I make no doubt' are perfunctory and almost self-mocking, reminiscent of the equally Drawcansirian parlance of Hercules Vinegar in declaring his self-appointment as Champion 'without the Consent of any one Person living, or without any other Commission or Authority than what I immediately derived from myself'. It is with the same kind of authority that Alexander Drawcansir appoints himself 'Knight Censor of Great Britain'. But the new Author soon proves less confident of the unanimous consent and deference to his 'Distinction'. His 'Brother Authors' are known for being, 'like mere Mechanics, [...] envious and jealous of a Rival in their Trade' (p. 15). Drawcansir guards him from their 'Jealousies', by renouncing 'any Dealing in Politics', 'personal Slander and Scurrility', and the produce of the 'Land of DULLNESS' (p. 15). In sum, the newcomer 'will not *deal in* any of those *Wares* which they at present *vend* to their Public' (p. 15: italics added). The vocabulary of a tradesman is extensively used in the inaugural essay, and whatever his 'Wares', Drawcansir is one in the 'Trade of Authoring'.

Hence the final argument after all the beating about the bush: 'the Price of my Paper being by Half, or at least, a third Part, higher than any other' (p. 16).

This is a Point, indeed, infinitely below my Consideration; however, at the Desire of my Bookseller, I shall give the Public his Reason for fixing the Price of Three-pence on this Paper, and which, he hopes, will be abundantly satisfactory.

First, he insists pretty much on the extraordinary Beauty of his Paper, and Print, which alone he thinks to be worth the additional Money.

Secondly, he urges the Quantity of the Matter which this Paper will contain; being, he says, more than double the Quantity of any other, and almost twenty Times as much as is generally contained in the Daily Advertiser. [A bill of estimation follows.]

Lastly, he lays some Weight on the superior Goodness of the Matter. On this, indeed, he lays very little Stress; however, he thinks it may be reckoned at something. Modesty forces me to suppress much of what he advances on this Head. One Particular, however, I cannot forbear inserting, as there is something new and whimsical in the Thought; I shall give it in his own Words; 'As you are a Man of Learning, Sir,' says he, 'and well travelled in the Greek and Roman Authors, I shall most probably, in this Paper, import many curious Treasures of Antiquity both from Greece, and Rome. Now, as Gentlemen daily give Hundreds of Pounds for antient Busts, and Statues, they will not surely scruple to give Three-half-pence for an antient Greek or Roman Sentiment.' (pp. 16-17)

This is the fullest of all dramatised relegations of commercial aspects to 'sagacious' booksellers in Fielding's writings, especially the journals. The sustained recounting of the bookseller's 'Reasoning', even 'in his own Words', is half-satirical and half-burlesque. For example, the order of the bookseller's grounds for the higher price of the journal reveals his vulgar materialist approach to literary evaluation: 'Beauty of his Paper and Print', 'Quantity', and 'Goodness of the Matter'. Judging from the last of his arguments in particular, supposedly a direct quotation of 'his own Words', the present bookseller is not likely to have any qualitatively different point of view from that of Bookweight towards classical learning.²⁷ If such matters are apparently 'infinitely below' the 'Consideration' of Drawcansir, they were not 'below' that of the real author-proprietor Henry Fielding. The reference to the *Daily Advertiser*, for example, was occasioned by Fielding's pique at the journal's refusal to carry advertisements for the Universal Register Office (p. 16n). He was not above repaying

²⁷ Andrew Millar, honoured as 'the Maecenas of the Age' by none less than Johnson, is very likely to have been the publisher of *The Covent-Garden Journal* (General Introduction, p. xxx), referred to as 'a faithful Ally of the Republic of Letters' in the journal (No. 1, p. 19). In my judgement, the bookseller in No. 1 is not exclusively Millar as individual, but a problematic figure, representing at once Millar and the bookseller as type, business-minded and usually mercenary and abusive of authors.

it by having the bookseller present a written estimate of the worth(lessness) of the paper. Ironically, we can measure, from the awkward contrast between the extravagantly haughty Author and the computing 'Bookseller', Fielding's full self-consciousness in dealing with the commercial aspects of the journal he both authored and owned. Drawcansir persists in distancing himself from the bookseller to the last, so much so that self-mockery is imbedded in the concluding declaration of the Author's moral design:

This is the Reasoning of my Bookseller; to imagine, indeed, that it is any Concern of mine, would be an Absurdity so great, that I shall not suspect any of my Readers to be capable of it. In an Age when all Men are so ready to serve their Country for nothing, I hope I shall not be thought an Exception. For my own Part, I cannot be supposed, by an intelligent Person, to have any other View, than to correct and reform the Public; and should have taken some Pains to have prevailed with my Bookseller to distribute these Papers *gratis*, had he not assured me, that such an Example would be of great Detriment to Trade. (p. 17)

Despite the initial and occasional sneers at 'those *Ephemeran* insect Authors', the Author of *The Covent-Garden Journal* is deeply anxious about the unrecognised 'Funeral' of authors and their papers. A glimpse of the most humiliating kind of 'Funeral' is given in the first number, when Drawcansir marvels at the tremendous quantity of paper daily coming forth into the market thus:

When I survey all these wondrous Works in my Mind, I am struck with no less Astonishment, than was the Foreigner when he saw Leadenhall Market; nor can I more conceive what becomes of all this Quantity of Paper, than he could find Consumers for so much Meat. The same Solution will, indeed, serve us both; for there are certainly as many B—ms in the World as there are Mouths. (p. 14)

The same subject is elaborated upon in the leader for No. 6, whose English motto, a translation from Martial, reads: 'How many fear the Moth's and Bookworm's Rage, | And Pastry-Cooks, sole Buyers in this Age?' (p. 47). Time, the 'great Destroyer', is particularly merciless to 'us Writers', whose works are not allowed the 'gradual and imperceptible Decay' of the 'Labours of the Architect, the Statuary, and the Painter':

'how many cunning Methods hath the Malice of Time invented, of later Days, to extirpate the Works of the Learned, and to convert the Invention of Paper, and even of Printing, to the total Abolition of those very Works which they were so ingeniously calculated to perpetuate' (pp. 47–48). The first of these 'cunning Methods' is barely hinted at for 'Decency's' sake:

It is the Application of it to a Use for which Parchment and Vellum, the antient Repositories of Learning, would have been utterly unfit. To this cunning Invention of Time, therefore, Printing and Paper have chiefly betrayed the Learned; nor can I see, without Indignation, the Booksellers, those great Enemies of Authors, endeavouring by all their sinister Arts to propagate so destructive a Method: for what is commoner than to see Books advertised to be printed *on a superfine, delicate, soft Paper*, and again, *very proper to be had in all Families*, a plain Insinuation to what Use they are adapted, according to these Lines.

*Lintott's for gen'ral Use are fit,
For some Folks read, but all Folks —.* (p. 48)

The 'Lines', from Pope's 'Verses To be prefix'd before Bernard Lintot's New Miscellany', originally read 'all Folks sh—' (p. 48n), and Drawcansir has already touched upon this indecent use for the 'B—ms' of the nation in No. 1. In the present context, more emphasis is on the victimisation of 'Authors' by 'Booksellers, those great Enemies of Authors', and however facetiously, Drawcansir often speaks for the 'Authors', worthy or not, in relation to the abuses by the 'Booksellers' in *The Covent-Garden Journal*. I shall return to this subject later on.

The other two groups of 'Depredators' on 'modern Learning' are 'Trunk-makers' and 'Pastry Cooks'. Besides their disgraceful recycling of 'the most valuable Productions of these Times' to line their wares, the 'Trunk-Makers' take a particular 'Delight in dismembering Authors; and in placing their several Limbs together in the most absurd Manner. Thus while the Bottom of a Trunk contains a Piece of Poetry, the Top presents us with a Sheet of Romance, and the Sides and Ends are adorned with mangled Libels of various Kinds' (p. 49). In the hands of the 'Pastry Cooks', aided by 'Grocers and Chandlers', the works of the moderns are 'humbled to the ignoble Purpose of supporting a Tart or a Custard!'. In *Tom Jones* (IV. 1), too, 'idle

Romances' are recommended 'to the sole Use of the Pastry-cook'. Given Drawcansir's repetition of phrases like 'of later Days', 'of later Years', 'modern Learning', 'the Moderns', and so forth, this essay ironically suggests that the writings of the 'Moderns' are not undeservedly bound to such destinations. Thus a sample of these writings is the fragment of the proceedings at the Robin Hood Society, which Drawcansir says he recently found used as wrapper by his baker (p. 51). The otherwise wasted fragment appears in the following number, imperfect as it is.

The discovery and publication of the Robinhoodians' fragment recall those of the manuscript of the *Journey from This World to the Next*. The Author A, coming across a fragment manuscript of the Author B used as wrappage by his stationer, recovers the remainder of the manuscript from the stationer and publishes it with an introduction, in which he recounts the history of the doomed manuscript as related by the stationer.

He produced about one Hundred Pages, acquainting me that he had saved no more: but that the Book was originally a huge Folio, had been left in his Garret by a Gentleman who lodged there, and who had left him no other Satisfaction for nine Months Lodging. He proceeded to inform me, that the Manuscript had been hawked about (as he phrased it) among all the Booksellers, who refused to meddle; some alledged that they could not read, others that they could not understand it. Some would have it to be an atheistical Book, and some that it was a Libel on the Government; for one or other of which Reasons they all refused to print it. That it had been likewise shewn to the R—l Society, but they shook their Heads, saying, there was nothing in it wonderful enough for them. That hearing the Gentleman was gone to the *West-Indies*, and believing it to be good for nothing else, he had used it as waste Paper. (pp. 3–4).

It is not only the trashy modern writings that fall to such uses. It is not guaranteed that the pages of *The Covent-Garden Journal* are safeguarded from similar uses. Who would save them from the hands of 'Pastry Cooks' or 'Trunk-makers' or even the 'B—ms' of the nation? In particular, Drawcansir's allusion to the booksellers' wicked advertisement of the 'superfine, delicate, soft Paper' recalls to our attention his own bookseller's boast of the 'Beauty of Paper' of the journal in the opening issue, which by hindsight seems to recommend the works of Drawcansir to the same unspeakable

use 'in all Families'. As Drawcansir says himself, 'at the waste Paper Market, the Cheapness of the Commodity is only considered', not the intrinsic worth of what is written on the paper (p. 50). 'Alexander' Drawcansir's anxiety in this respect peeps out thus:

*Great Alexander dead, and turn'd to Clay,
May stop a Hole to keep the Wind away. (p. 49)*

The 'Great Alexander' that replaces the original 'Imperious Caesar' in *Hamlet* is not so much Alexander of Macedonia as Alexander of Covent Garden, concerned about the ephemerality and uncertain destiny of his undertaking. Later in No. 33, a fictitious correspondent articulates the concern more distinctly as follows:

In this very learned and enlightened Age, in which Authors are almost as numerous as Booksellers, I doubt not but your Correspondents furnish you with a sufficient Quantity of waste Paper. I perhaps may add to the Heap.
(p. 202)

This correspondent goes on to relate what he witnessed at an inn in Somersetshire. A 'very beauish Gentleman', in fact a 'Linen-Draper at London', asks the landlord for 'some Paper' to air his boots:

Upon which the Landlord presented him with a Piece of an old News-Paper, *D—n you*, says the Gent. *this is not half enough, have you never a Bible or Common-Prayer Book in the House? Half a Dozen Chapters of a Genesis, with a few Prayers, make an excellent Fire in a Pair of Boots.* 'Oh! Lord forgive you,' says the Landlord, 'sure you would not burn such Books as those.' *No!* cries the Spark, *Where was you born; go into a Shop of London, and buy some Butter or a Quartern of Tea, and then you'll see what Use is made of these Books.* (pp. 204–05)

In an age when even the Bible is used in this way, one must be very 'sanguine' to be confident of any better treatment. The 'old News-Paper' passed to the damning 'Spark' is not unlikely to be *The Covent-Garden Journal*.

Whatever his professed contempt for the unworthy members of the literary profession, what fundamentally concerns the Author of *The Covent-Garden Journal* is the difficulty or impossibility of discerning the worthy and the unworthy under the present conditions of the republic of letters governed by the booksellers or 'Dealers in Letters' (No. 19, p. 129). 'Taste', as the sole gauge of wit, is at issue in Nos. 18 and 19, where the 'Dealers in Letters' appear in parallel with the concocting vintner (No. 18) and the counterfeiting jeweller (No. 19). True wit is to champagne as 'Dulness' is to perry, and the 'Dealers in Letters' or 'Paper Merchants', just like the 'Perry Merchants', impose on their customers by selling 'one Thing for another' (p. 127).

Both of these make use indeed of the same Imposition, and as every Dealer in French Vinegar, hath the Names of the most excellent Wines always at his Tongue's End, and ready to be applied to the worst Goods in his Warehouse, so hath our Perry-Merchant constantly in his Mouth the Names of the most celebrated Authors; under one of which without any Scruple, he vends the genuine anonymous Productions of Grubstreet; the Names of Swift, Addison, Pope, Dryden, Prior, &c. have been by the one Kind of Merchant, as of Lafeat, Latour, Bennet, &c. have been by the other. (p. 127)

No. 19 further questions the 'Taste' of the 'Dealers in Letters'. In 'Matters of Invention and Learning', there are 'no Rules to guide our Opinion' but 'Taste', whereas 'in the Distinction of Diamonds, China, and such like, from their Counterfeits, there are some certain well-known Criterions to form and direct our Judgment' (pp. 129–30). Thus the booksellers' want of 'Taste' causes an utter disorder in the republic of letters.

The truest Brilliants often lie overlooked and neglected on the Booksellers' Shelves, while the most impudent Counterfeits are received, admired, and encouraged. Milton himself (I am ashamed of my Country when I say it) very narrowly escaped from the Jaws of Oblivion; and instead of shining for ever with those great Lights of Antiquity in whose Constellation he is now admitted, was like to have been bundled up with those *Ephemera* insect Authors, of whom every Day almost sees both the Birth and the Funeral.
(p. 129)

In charging the degeneracy in the republic of letters largely upon the booksellers, 'those great Enemies of Authors', Drawcansir cannot but be in sympathy with his 'Brother Authors', however unworthy they are. In this regard, a most serious indictment against the booksellers appears in No. 51 of *The Covent-Garden Journal*. As a whole, the leader of No. 51 is a succinct account of the tremendously expanded 'Paper Manufacture' in 'modern Times', to which 'nothing perhaps hath more contributed, than the new Invention of writing without the Qualifications of any Genius or Learning' (p. 282). The 'Paper Merchants, commonly called Booksellers', it is implied, encouraged the new kind of writing to profit themselves, if they did not invent it themselves, for on the introduction of such 'new fashioned Wares' as 'Blasphemy, Treason, Bawdry and Scandal' into the 'Market',

the Paper Merchants, commonly called Booksellers, found so immense a Demand for them, that their Business was *to find Hands sufficient to supply the Wants of the Public*. In this however, they had no great Difficulty, as the Work was so extremely easy, that no Talents whatever (except that of being able to write) not even the Capacity of Spelling, were requisite. (p. 282)

Furthermore, the 'Paper Merchants' have so far invented three very ingenious methods to advertise their 'Wares' at the cost of their 'mere Mechanics' alias authors. At first, the 'Merchant' himself used to 'mount in the most public Part of the Town into a wooden Machine called the Pillory', following the example of Curl, Mist, and others (p. 282). Yet 'some of the more cunning' among them soon 'began to decline this Practice themselves, and employed their Understrappers, that is to say their Writers for such Purposes' (p. 283). The Pillory has subsequently given place to the 'Gallows' and the 'whipping Post', of which the last is currently the method best liked by the booksellers:

tho' perhaps this may raise less Curiosity than the Gallows, in one Instance at least, it hath visibly the Advantage: For an Author tho' he may deserve it often, can be hanged but once, but he may be whipped several Times, indeed six Times in one Sentence, of which we have lately seen an Instance in the Person of Stroud, who is a strong Proof of the great Profits which the Paper-Merchants derive from the whipping one of their Manufacturers. (p. 284)

The recent 'Instance' refers to the whipping of one William Stroud, who had the sixth and last of his monthly whippings on 24 June 1752, just three days prior to the present essay, and according to a reprinted news item in the same number, 'fainted away' after that (p. 284n). Drawcansir's concern for the abused authors is not casual by any means. The tonal difference notwithstanding, Drawcansir's descriptions of the 'mere Mechanics' or 'Manufacturers' who drudge under the exploitative booksellers denote the same concern as Ralph's in portraying 'the Writer in his Garret' in comparison to the Slave in the Mines':

there is no Difference between the Writer in his Garret, and the Slave in the Mines; but that the former has his Situation in the Air, the latter in the Bowels of the Earth: Both have their Tasks assigned them alike: Both must drudge *and* starve; and neither can hope for Deliverance. The Compiler must compile; the Composer must compose on; sick or well; in Spirit or out; whether furnish'd with Matter or not; till by the joint Pressure of Labour, Penury and Sorrow, he has worn out his Parts, his Constitution, and all the little Stock of Reputation he had acquir'd among *the Trade*; who were All, perhaps, that ever heard of his Name. (p. 22)

Such could be the fate of any author who fights for the 'Morals of his Countrymen', as well as the lesser 'Mechanics' in Grub Street, in an age when

many of these his Cotemporaries, who have professed the Laws or Religion of their Country; [...] many others who have fought its Battles, after an obscure and wretched Life of Want and Misery, have bequeathed their Families to the Stalls and the Streets. (No. 34, p. 209)

In Drawcansir's view, the present state of the 'Commonwealth of Literature' is 'a Democracy, or rather indeed [...] downright Anarchy', after the demise of the last monarchy of 'King ALEXANDER, surnamed POPE' (No. 23, p. 153). King Alexander's reign, succeeding that of King John, 'surnamed' Dryden, is recalled thus:

This Prince enjoyed the Crown many Years, and is thought to have stretched the Prerogative much farther than his Predecessor: He is said to have been extremely jealous of the Affections of his Subjects, and to have employed

various Spies, by whom if he was informed of the least Suggestion against his Title, he never failed of branding the accused Person with the Word DUNCE on his Forehead in broad Letters; after which the unhappy Culprit was obliged to lay his Pen forever; for no Bookseller would venture to print a Word that he wrote.

He did indeed put a total Restraint on the Liberty of the Press: For no Person durst read any Thing which was writ without his Licence and Approbation; and this Licence he granted only to four during his Reign, namely, to the celebrated Dr. Swift, to the ingenious Dr. Young, to Dr. Arbuthnot, and to one Mr. Gay, four of his principal Courtiers and Favourites.
(pp. 153–54)

Drawcansir's tone is markedly ambivalent in this chronicle of the bygone reign by absolute 'Prerogative' on one hand and by 'Spies' and 'Courtiers and Favourites' on the other. At the same time, it is admitted that Pope's presumably autocratic reign was much to be preferred to the present anarchy. He held unquestioned sway over dunces and booksellers, and above all, 'without dividing any deeper into his Character, we must allow that King Alexander had great Merit as a Writer, and his Title to the Kingdom of Wit better founded *at least* than his Enemies pretended' (p. 154: italics added). Alexander Pope, referred to as the 'great Man' in letters in another essay (No. 59, p. 321), is as important a 'great Man' as Alexander the Great in the background of Alexander Drawcansir the Author of *The Covent-Garden Journal*. I have discussed Fielding's ambivalence towards this literary 'great Man' in my discussion of *The Author's Farce* and in other contexts in this thesis. To Harry Luckless or H. Scriblerus Secundus, the great poet and his Scriblerian coterie duly embodied the literary authority lacking in an unrecognised beginner. When the Author of *Joseph Andrews* referred to Pope as the 'great Poet' living 'among all the great People' including Lady Booby herself (III. 6, p. 235), it was not really a whole-hearted homage to the poet attending the tables of the great. Having come through the much reviled triumph of *Tom Jones* and the much reviled disaster of *Amelia*, Fielding's last Author, 'Alexander, sirnamed' Drawcansir, looks back upon Alexander Pope with nonetheless jaundiced eyes. Alexander Drawcansir seems unable to conceive himself as anything but a belated Alexander, a 'humble Imitation' of the great Scriblerian, or to categorically detach himself from his 'Brother Authors', whom, so far as he can

see, the late great poet would have branded as dunces with absolute authority. As Goldgar rightly says with reference to *The Covent-Garden Journal*, 'even at its most "Scriblerian" Fielding's irony betrays his sense of powerlessness in the face of the certainty of cultural decay'.²⁸ Whatever his proclaimed moral warfare 'as writer/censor' against the stern reality of both cultural and moral degeneracy, Fielding is aware that 'he is powerless and without authority, only a Drawcansir who says, like the character in the *Rehearsal*, "all this I can do, because I dare"' (p. 101). Without authority, 'one must simply wait with patience and rest content with mockery' (p. 103). The same kind of sentiments, as we have seen, permeate the pages of *Amelia*, too, where neither the fatigued magistrate nor the sanguine clergyman has enough authority to do anything beyond barely helping the Booths out of ruin. Dr. Harrison and Drawcansir mirror each other, in their 'Drawcansirian' attempts to achieve the Herculean task of purifying the modern Augean stables, attempts which are equally fated to be 'd—nd'. 'Without a Word [...] of Apology for myself', says Drawcansir in the end, 'I here lay down my Pen', and 'so ends the dismal ditty'.

²⁸ Bertrand A. Goldgar, 'Swift and the Later Fielding', *The Yearbook of English Literature*, 18 (1988), 93–107 (p. 103).

Conclusion

On the fashionable stage of literary theory and criticism, the 'author', dead or alive, has been the most talked-about figure for years. Since Barthes' pronouncement of the death of the author, the 'quarrel', as Lipking puts it, 'between Vitalists and Morticians' has persisted in literary discourses (p. 180).¹ Lipking elucidates the political and intellectual background of Barthes' monumental pronouncement in 1968 in terms of the ethos of 'iconoclasm' that was permeating his milieu at that time, which led poststructuralist theorists in general to presuppose and oppose the strong association of the word 'author' with 'authority, the authoritarian, authoritarianism' (p. 185). Parrinder, too, refers to this 'coupling' of authorship and authority as 'a commonplace' instituted in the 'aftermath of the post-structuralist inquisitions into the Death of the Author and the Myth of the Author' (p. vii). Recently, studies of authorship seem to have begun to derive momentum from quite different resources and actively invest in various projects to give a historical account of the 'birth' rather than the 'death' of the author. Not a few critics are turning afresh to the 'Age of Authors' to establish the 'genealogy of modern authorship'. Despite some minor variance among them,² it is commonly emphasised that it was a difficult birth and anything but authority was associated with authorship in contemporary minds, especially in the eyes of authors themselves.

In commencing upon an inquiry into Fielding's self-awareness as 'author', I sought to reconstruct Fielding's own usage of the word, with all its self-mocking uncertainty, instead of adopting any from particular critical disciplines or offering one of my own, as Ian A. Bell seems to do in *Henry Fielding: Authorship and Authority*.³

¹ Seán Burke's recent book, *The Death and Return of the Author: Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault and Derrida* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992), scrutinises the pronouncements of the three most influential poststructuralists on this issue of the death of the author, attempting to 'deconstruct' their deconstruction, so to speak, of the concept of authorship.

² For instance, Saunders and Hunter's essay proposes to correct the 'formation of subject' view both historicist and poststructuralist approaches commonly reach in the end, by further 'historicising' the emergence of the 'aesthetic' as well as the 'legal personality' of the author.

³ Bell's book came out when my thesis was at a fairly advanced stage, which is why rather few responses were made to it in my thesis, despite some shared interests between his and my argument.

In his not unuseful introduction, Bell surveys diverse theories and concepts of the author, from Barthesian to Bakhtinian, and suggests adapting the concept of '*auteur*' in film studies to Fielding's case. Thus he adds yet another term to the already lengthy list of confusing references to 'Fielding': the 'dramatised' or '(un)reliable narrator' (Booth); the 'created self' (Preston); the 'implied author' (Iser); or even 'SuperFielding, the author's very best version of himself' (Bell, p. 30). Such an elaborate addition notwithstanding, Bell's discussion proper scarcely makes significant use of the new concept but frequently lapses into the same muddle of references as is remarked in virtually all Fielding criticism. Hence the slurring of 'Fielding' in one sentence, 'the author' in the next, and 'the narrator of *Tom Jones*' in the next again (e.g. p. 172). Neither the poststructuralist 'author' nor those confusing references to 'Fielding' are likely to bear out the complex irony in Fielding's own usage of the word 'author', especially the profoundly self-demeaning irony underlying his self-identification as an 'author' without authority, alias a 'laughing Stock, [...] a poor Fellow, and in general an Object of Contempt'. In view of this, the term 'Author' has been used throughout my thesis to convey Fielding's ambivalence in at once identifying himself with and distancing himself from the 'Authors' of/in his writings.

As mentioned above, recent researchers in the genealogy of authorship stress the collective anxiety about the alienation of cultural authority from professional authorship in the 'Age of Authors'. In this regard, Bell canvasses Fielding's anxious adjustment to the demands of commercialised authorship, especially in terms of his 'adversarial' relationship with public readership, and his manoeuvrings to establish his cultural superiority to writers like Richardson. In doing so, Bell generally puts such emphasis on Fielding's pose as a culturally if not socially privileged writer that he even attempts, for example, to pit the Fielding of *Miscellanies* against the Fielding of *Joseph Andrews* (Ch. 4), mainly on the ground that the publication by subscription of *Miscellanies* enabled Fielding to address with more confidence his subscribers as readers from more aristocratic or at least wealthier and presumably more cultured

backgrounds than common romance readers. Admittedly, it is one of my arguments, too, that Fielding, like other authors, would seek after the aura of cultural distinction through aristocratic connections and show it off when attained, with a view to detaching himself from Grubbean authorship. Even so, Bell's reading of Fielding's *Miscellanies* seems to me considerably flawed by his failure to perceive Fielding's no less ambivalent relationship with the titled people of quality, as well as by some erroneous assumptions concerning the writings collected in *Miscellanies*. First of all, Bell's reading presupposes that Fielding wrote the works published in *Miscellanies* with an 'identifiable audience' in view (p. 144), which is untrue. They were all separately written over more than ten years from 1730. Fielding did not know that he would become a 'subscribable' author until he or rather his 'sagacious' bookseller Andrew Millar was encouraged to lay the proposal by the unexpected success of *Joseph Andrews*. His attitude to the very convention of publication by subscription was sarcastic enough, as was incorporated in the history of Wilson, one of the authors denied the pomp and benefit of the convention (III. 3). We have noted a similar sentiment in *The Author's Farce*, too. Bell is on the wrong track when he claims that Fielding was 'conscious of the sophistication' of his 'up-market' audience in composing *A Journey from This World to the Next* and *Jonathan Wild* (pp. 146, 144). The earlier composition of *Jonathan Wild*, published as the third volume of *Miscellanies*, is almost a given in Fielding studies, and the fragmentary or even truncated appearance of the *Journey* and also its sufficiently recognisable similarity to other anti-Walpole satires by Fielding (Goldgar, General Introduction, *Miscellanies*, II) strongly suggest the possibility that Fielding dusted off the manuscript of an uncompleted anti-Walpole satire to fill the second volume of *Miscellanies*.⁴

It is true that Fielding's writings collected in *Miscellanies* reveal his more or less aristocratic leaning in terms of genres and addressed readers. The reason is other than what Bell suggests. For one thing, Fielding did not really commence as 'Romance

⁴ Bell's largely casual approach to *Jonathan Wild*, for example, is attested by the fact that, even though he centres his argument on the peculiarity of the 1743 audience, he uses the 1754 edition as text, without even acknowledging the fact (p. 165n13).

Writer', until his essay with *Joseph Andrews* turned him in that direction. He had begun with drama and verse, because they were at least inherited genres, in which not only Fielding but most people of quality were duly educated. Furthermore, Fielding, subscribed or not, kept addressing people of quality, however unregarding they were, until his decisive disillusion in 1741–42 gave occasion to the burst of resentment at 'Attendance on the Great' in *Shamela* and *Joseph Andrews*. Even before then, his turbulent relationships with Walpole on one hand and with the opposition patrons on the other infused his writings with at once self-mocking and self-pitying portraits of his implicit subserviency to the great. Fielding's relationships with the great did not come to a period then but lasted throughout his career in one way or another, thus constantly interfering with his pursuit of an autonomous literary identity and authority. Fielding's problematic self-awareness as author cannot be fully grasped until we rightly recognise his tensioned relations to those people of quality, as well as his scepticism of the 'down-market' audience.

'Bob, the poet's foe' (Swift, 'To Mr. Gay', 3) played a most crucial role in estranging men of letters from men of quality. It is rightly argued by Goldgar in *Walpole and the Wits* that it was during Walpole's regime that the divorce of literary and political authority was sealed once and for all. Hence the reign of the Scriblerians, the fiercest enemies of Walpole, in the republic of letters. Fielding applied to join the privileged 'Club', to borrow their literary authority, but access was denied to a dubious beginner. At the same time, he addressed the Prime Minister for patronage, but this, too, came to nothing. When he was enlisted in the campaign against 'the Great Man' by his opposition patrons, Fielding's relationship with them, as well as with Walpole, was destabilised by his problematic awareness that as author he was 'a very humble servant' to the great. He would give full vent to his embittered attendance on the opposition patrons in *The Opposition: A Vision*. In fact, the very first prelude to the formation of this relationship ended on a typically discordant note. I have earlier referred to Fielding's dedication of *Don Quixote in England* to the Earl of Chesterfield in 1734 as his first approach to the opposition, to which the dedicatee

gave neither attention nor a 'present'. This was surely one of Fielding's 'mortifying' experiences with the great in his more precarious years, which account for his habitual sarcasm at the convention of dedications. Whatever his disappointment on this occasion, Fielding would soon find Chesterfield among the leaders of the 'Patriot' opposition and eulogise him thus: 'In Chesterfield to ripe Perfection come' ('Of True Greatness', 261). Far more elaborate praise of the peer is incorporated in *Joseph Andrews* (III. 1), denoting, as examined earlier, not so much Fielding's simple gratitude as his anxiety about the inevitably unequal relation of protégé to patron.

It is an intriguing coincidence that Chesterfield was to be remembered for his notorious disregard of Johnson's appeal for his patronage. In 1747, Johnson publicly addressed the peer for support by dedicating *The Plan of an English Dictionary* to him, claiming that by his acknowledged 'authority' over the English language he would compile the *Dictionary*. In return, Chesterfield presented the author with the sum of ten pounds and concerned himself no further with the venture. With the publication of the *Dictionary* imminent in the last months of 1754, Chesterfield 'attempted to re-establish himself as patron and reassert aristocratic authority over language' by publishing two puffing articles in *The World*, a journal owned by Johnson's bookseller Robert Dodsley (Kernan, pp. 199–203). If Johnson's 'sagacious' bookseller would delightedly embrace the great man's essays for their great advertising value, the author would not tolerate the mock-patron to appropriate his achievement of nine years' hard labour 'without one Act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour' from the patron, as he put it in the often quoted letter of reproach to Chesterfield in 1755.⁵ This letter is considered an emphatic pronouncement of the author's right in the history of modern authorship (Kernan, p. 202).

⁵ Letter to Earl of Chesterfield (7 February 1755), in *The Letters of Samuel Johnson*, ed. by R. W. Chapman, 3 vols (1952; repr. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), I, 64–65 (p. 64). J. C. D. Clark suggests a political reason for Johnson's aversion to Chesterfield, that is, his betrayal of the Jacobite cause after taking recourse to James III's influence to effect Walpole's fall: *Samuel Johnson: Literature, Religion and English Cultural Politics from the Restoration to Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

Fielding expressed the same kind of concern in his writings, most notably in Joseph's 'Moral Reflections' (III. 6) and the dedication of *Tom Jones*. As analysed earlier, the footman hero of *Joseph Andrews* gives voice to the very concern in Fielding, with reference to the painters' primal ownership of the 'fine Pictures' hung in the parlour of the great. The 'Money' of the great should not deprive an author, whether a painter or a writer, of his or her authorial 'right' to whatever is created by his or her own 'Ingenuity'. Granted that Fielding's relationship with Lyttelton was not so antagonistic as Johnson's with Chesterfield, we have nonetheless noted Fielding's express refusal to 'give up' his 'Right' to the patron in the dedication of *Tom Jones*. Though he admittedly owed the sustenance during the composition of *Tom Jones* to Lyttelton, and for that matter, his appointment to magistracy was realised through Lyttelton's recommendation, Fielding would not yield his authorial 'Right' to his work to the patron.⁶

While there is no knowing for certain the practical scale of patronage conferred on Fielding during his long-standing relationship with the Broad Bottom patrons from *Pasquin* onwards, it is not likely at any rate that Fielding was sumptuously rewarded by them, even for services performed. After all, Fielding had started as 'Hackney Writer' in the theatre and remained such beyond his theatrical career too. In *The Author's Farce*, he identifies his own with 'the fate | To live by one's pate | And be forced to write hackney for bread' (II. 3). Despite the tonal facetiousness, concern for 'bread' or 'Pudding' remains very real for every Author. Hercules Vinegar refers to the author's 'thin Diet' of 'Fame', which caused, for example, Butler to be 'starved to Death in a Garret' (*The Champion*, 27 November 1739). The Author of *Tom Jones* is not wholly ironical in his 'Invocation' to 'jolly Substance', a 'much plumper Dame' than 'Fame', who would show him to 'the well-seasoned Beef, and Pudding richly stained with Plumbs' (XIII. 1), and Alexander Drawcansir, too, has one eye to

⁶ In this context, it is noteworthy that Rose refers to Milton's denunciation of Charles II's appropriation of Sidney's *Arcadia*, as political context to his vindication of the author's right in *Eikonoklastes* (1649), which with *Areopagitica* (1644) Rose takes as the earliest statement of the author's right (p. 55).

'Pudding' and the other to 'Fame' (*The Covent-Garden Journal*, 22 August 1752). Despite his complaints about those unworthy authors in the republic of letters, Fielding's attitude to the 'Writer, whose only Livelihood is his Pen' (*The Jacobite's Journal*, 26 March 1748) is rather sympathetic than purely disparaging or disdainful. Indeed, his apologia for authors dependent on the pen for living is closely related to his denunciation of the great, who desert their patrician duties to discern and encourage talented men of letters. In the essay just quoted from *The Jacobite's Journal*, Trott-Plaid is in fact more genuinely concerned to defend the opposition writer, James Ralph, than to vindicate the ministry in whose service he is conducting the journal. Yet the most interesting case in relation to Fielding's apologia for authors is remarked in *Joseph Andrews*, where Parson Adams himself ventures to turn author to add to his ridiculous stipend of twenty three pounds a year under the mock-patronage of the Boobys. In this regard, I have emphasised that Adams is not simply an eccentric country parson but a character through whom Fielding expresses his self-awareness as author in clearly resentful terms against the mock-patrons like Lady Booby and also his defence of an author in pursuit of financial and spiritual independence through published authorship.

However, Fielding's vindication of professional authors against neglectful patrons is also problematised by his awareness of the uncomprehending hostility of the new patrons of commercialised letters. *The Author's Farce* is in essence a dramatisation of Fielding's forced concession to earn bread by pandering to the baser demands of the paying audience, namely the 'Pleasures of the Town'. 'Farce' signifying to Fielding every undignified theatrical form, he sees in himself an author who stages a farce to entertain the audience. *The Author's Farce* marks Fielding's burgeoning self-awareness as 'an author of a farce', which grows into his chronic identification of himself as 'an author of a damned farce', just like Pillage the damned author in *Eurydice Hissed*. Unseemly as he is, Pillage the damned author and master of a playhouse, in my opinion, anticipates the 'Author' as 'Master of a public Ordinary' in *Tom Jones*, the very figure in whom even Battestin, the most influential of Fielding

critics, erroneously sees a master of comic fiction who merrily celebrates the feast of life. What underlies Fielding's self-awareness as 'Master of a public Ordinary' is his genuine and deep-seated anxiety about the audience's uncomprehending and unreasoned damnation. Faced with such an audience, Fielding perceives the futility of his claim to the authority of 'an incensed Satirist' (Dedication). In this regard, I described the fate of Dr. Harrison's letter in *Amelia* as yet another succinct dramatisation of the damnation of a satirist by the uncomprehending audience. On self-reflection, Fielding always found an author doubly beleaguered by unregarding patrons and abusive audiences and thus deprived of authority of any kind.

Fielding's gloss on 'Author' as a 'laughing Stock' in *The Covent-Garden Journal* is pungently self-referential. It is also a recapitulation of what had been his most persistent concern since *The Author's Farce*, in which a sorry scribbler sings: 'An author's a joke | To all manner of folk'. Significantly enough, Fielding's last appearance on the stage of 'This World', as depicted in *The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* (posthumously published in 1755), is as a fatigued and paralysed author made a 'laughing Stock' by the insulting sailors (p. 47). The ensuing scene down by the Styx might have been like this:

A tall Man came next, who stripped off an old grey Coat with great Readiness, but as he was stepping into the Boat, *Mercury* demanded half his Chin, which he utterly refused to comply with, insisting on it that it was all his own. [...] After a long Dispute, *Mercury* bid him to go back and be d—mned again; to which he answered, he would see him d—mned first.

(*The Champion*, 24 May 1740)

'And so ends the farce.'

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